THE DRAMA;

OR,

THEATRICAL

POCKET MAGAZINE.

No. VII. SEPTEMBER, 1824. VOL. VI.

MR. MATHEWS.

"—— A merrier man
Within the limits of becoming mirth,
We never spent an hour's talk withall."

"His eye begets occasion for his wit,
For, every object that the one doth catch,
The other turns to a mirth-moving jest;
That aged years play truant at his tales,
And younger hearings are quite ravished."

That excellence in tragic acting is of more difficult attainment than in comic, is a position, of the truth of which if any proof were needed, it would be sufficiently afforded by a reference to the present condition of the stage; we have comic actors in abundance, and those most admirable ones, but in the tragic line there are but few performers to be found upon whom any very warm eulogium can be hazarded. Tragic fame, however, is the *ignis fatuus*, which deludes every young aspirant to Thespian honours; and of the comic performers now upon the boards, it is a ludicrous reflection, that many of the very best of them commenced their career in the love-sick *Romeo*, or bewil-

dered *Octavian;* it seems scarcely credible, yet it is undoubtedly the fact, that this was the case with the inimitamitable LISTON, as well as with the subject of the present article.(1)

It was exceedingly fortunate for MATHEWS, and for the public, that he discovered his mistake and retraced his steps before it was too late; he would have made but a very indifferent tragedian even in his best efforts; while the town would have missed the gratification of witnessing one of the most admirable comedians that ever graced a stage. However, to his credit be it spoken, that when he discovered his true bent, he at once resigned all ambition towards the lofty honours that MELPOMENE could bestow, and resolutely devoted himself to her sprightly sister.

The extraordinary merit of Mr. MATHEWS, as a comic performer, is so universally known and allowed, that a few general remarks will be all that can be required of us, and indeed all that can be necessary; for to enumerate all the original excellencies of his comic genius, would be to enumerate every comic character he has performed and still performs: and it has been well observed, that it is difficult to say, whether his characters belong most to him or he to his characters. His pictures of men and manners, though most highly colored, are scarcely ever debased by buffoonery; and his humour, though rich to an excess, is never extravagant, unless it be in parts, which in themselves are confessedly caricatures; indeed we are clearly of opinion, that Mr. MATHEWS is one of the chastest performers we have;—this may probably be denied by those, who have only been accustomed to see him in those flimsy farcical daubs, by the performance of which his genius has been but too frequently disgraced, but it will meet with a ready assent from all, who have seen his more worthy efforts; who are acquainted with his *Scapin, Lying Valet, Touchstone, Mawworm, Sir Fretful Plagiary, Rover,* or

(1) Vide vol. v. 268. The following list of those comic actors, who commenced their career under the banners of MELPOMENE may not be unacceptable.—BANNISTER, ELLISTON, FAWCETT, OXBERRY, BLANCHARD, DOWTON, LISTON, MATHEWS, the late Mr. LOVEGROVE, Mr. JONES

Buskin. His principal excellence is the representation of officious valets and humourous old men, two species of character, that, with most actors, are merely buffoons in livery, and buffoons with walking-sticks. His attention to correctness, however, by no means lessons his vivacity, but it is the vivacity of the world, not of the stage; it seems rather his nature than his art, and he is not one of those actors who elevates his sensations the moment he enters the stage, and drops them the instant he departs. It is a very common and a very injurious fault, with actors to come before the audience with a manner expressive of beginning a task; they adjust their neckcloths and hats as if they had dressed in a hurry, look about them as much as to say "what sort of a house have I got this evening?" and commence their speeches in a tone of patient weariness, as if they contemplated and shrank from the future labours of the evening. Not so with MATHEWS:—he makes his appearance neither with this indifference on the one hand, nor on the other, with that laboured mirth, which seems to have been lashed into action like a top, and which goes down like a top at regular intervals: he is equable and consistent in his humour, and inspires his audience with a constant spirit of cheerfulness. Such a cheerfulness is the most desirable effect in every comic performer, and this feeling is one of the sensations which render us more pleased with comedy than with farce; it is more agreeable to reason, because it leaves room for thinking; it is removed from violence, which always carries a degree of pain into the more exquisite pleasures; it is more like the happiness that we may attain in real life, and therefore more fitted to dispose us to an enjoyment of our feelings. The only fault in the general style of Mr. MATHEWS, is a redundancy of bodily motion approaching to restlessness; this fault, however, (like the late Mr. KEMBLE's stiffness in *Penruddock,*) becomes a beauty in his performance of the restless *lying valet*, and of *Risk*, in "*Love Laughs at Locksmiths*," who are both in a perpetual bustle of cheating and contrivance.

It has been a very common, but a very silly observation that MATHEWS is a mere mimic.—That his powers of mimicry are most surprising, is undoubtedly true; but those

who assert that this is the extent of his talents, must either be excessively ignorant of the subject upon which they presume to offer an opinion, or are still more lamentably influenced by prejudice, to decry and misrepresent the object of their remarks.(1) Strictly speaking, every actor, perhaps, may be looked upon, more or less, as a mimic, and it would consequently follow that the best mimic must be the best actor; but it is intended to insinuate, by the assertion we have noticed, that MATHEWS's sole ability consists in imitating the habits and peculiarities of the "outward man," whilst the more difficult task of depicting the passions and emotions of our nature is totally beyond his reach. Never, however, was any assertion more groundless; we could cite his performance of characters, innumerable, to disprove it, but we shall content ourselves with instancing his *Sir Fretful Plagiary*—the most finished, the most comic, and most natural piece of acting the stage can boast. The fretful impatience of criticism, the irritability, the envy, arrogance and affected contempt of praise and censure, which characterise this exquisite sketch, are rendered with inimitable fidelity and fully proves his extensive knowledge of the human heart. Nothing can be more admirable than his look, when the severe criticism is detailed by his malicious acquaintance. While he affects a pleasantry of countenance, he cannot help betraying his rage in his eyes, in that feature, which always displays our most predominant feelings: if he draws the air to and fro through his teeth, as if he were perfectly assured of his own pleasant feelings, he convinces every one by his tremulous and restless limbs, that he is in absolute torture; if the lower part of his face expands into a painful smile, the upper part contracts into a glaring frown, which contradicts the ineffectual good humour beneath; every thing in his face becomes rigid, confused, and uneasy; it is a mixture of oil and vinegar, in which the acid predominates; it is anger putting on a mask that is only the more hideous in proportion as it is more fantastic. The sudden drop of his smile into deep and bitter indignation, when he can endure sarcasm no longer, completes this impassioned picture of

(1) Vide vol. iii, page 120.

Sir Fretful; but lest his indignation should swell into mere tragedy, Mr. M. accompanies it with all the touches of familiar vexation; while he is venting his rage in vehement expressions, he accompanies his more emphatic words with a closing thrust of his buttons, which he fastens and unfastens up and down his coat; and when his obnoxious friend approaches his snuff-box to take a pinch, he claps down the lid, and turns violently off with a most malicious mockery of grin. These are the performances and the characters, which are the true fame of actors and dramatists.

We have selected this character for remark, not because it is a solitary specimen of excellence, but because we think it is upon the whole most equably so: its extreme brevity is the only drawback upon the satisfaction we derive from it; and after the exit of *Sir Fretful*, even the humour of *Puff and Burleigh*, and *Tilburina*, appears flat and tedious. In many other parts, with an enumeration of the names of which it is unnecessary to lengthen this article, MATHEWS maintains a similar superiority, yet this is the man, who is frequently called a *mimic!* whom the editor of the well known dramatic periodical, now defunct (*The Theatrical Inquisitor*) had the daring effrontery and matchless impudence to term "the vilest buffoon that ever disgraced a stage;"—"measureless liar!" That his powers of mimicry are most wonderful, and set description at defiance, we readily allow, at the same time observing, that they are the more valuable on our stage from their rarity. He can with the most astonishing facility assume every peculiarity of voice, manner, and even look of the person he attempts; and whilst we are listening to his imitations of MUNDEN, DOWTON, HARLEY, YOUNG, KEAN, &c. &c. it is scarcely possible to believe, that the very men themselves are not standing before us. His feats in this way, however, are not confined to the mere mimicry of particular individuals—let him attempt whatever he may, he is equally successful; whether a Bartholomew-fair showman, or a mail coach guard,—an idiot, an old woman, or a methodist parson; he seldom fails to produce an impression, which those who have never witnessed his performances, can form not the slightest idea of.

Previous to our concluding these remarks, it may be necessary to notice one or two more of Mr. MATHEWS's performances in the regular drama. The farce of "*Hit or Miss*," entirely owes its popularity to his eccentric powers; his clever personation of the part of *Dick Cypher*, is of the most lively and striking description, and at a period of time, when the *Four-in-hand Club* obtained so much notoriety, this farce with his performance became the rage, and nightly filled the coffers of the theatre. This galling caricature effectually hunted the ridiculous beings, who composed the club into their primitive obscurity. His "*Mawworm*" is a happy personification of *Praise-God-Barebones*—an exact portraiture of one of those ignorant enthusiastics, who lose sight of all good, while they are vainly hunting after an ideal perfectibility.

"Near the mad mansions of Moorfields he'll bawl:
Friends, fathers, mothers, brothers, sisters, all,
Shut up your shops, and listen to my call."

His *Scout*, in the "*Village Lawyer*," and *Mingle*, in the "*Beehive*," are also the very perfection of comicality.

Of his characters of senility we have already noticed *Sir Fretful Plagiary*, but there are many others, in which he stands without a competitor. The old age of Mr. MATHEWS is like his other excellencies, perfectly unaffected and correct. The appearance of years he manages so adroitly, that many of his admirers, who have never seen him off the stage, insist that he is an elderly man, and the reason of this deception is evident; most of our comedians in their representation of age, either make no alteration of their voice, and like antiquarian cheats, palm a walking-stick or a hat upon us for something very ancient, or sink into so unnatural an imbecility, that they are apt on occasion to forget their tottering knees and bent shoulders, and like *Vertumnus* in the poet, are young and old in a minute. MATHEWS never appears to wish to be old; time seems to have come to him, not he to time, and as he never, where he can avoid it, makes that show of feebleness, which the vanity of age always would avoid, so he never forgets that general appearance of years, which the natural feebleness of age could not help. The two charac-

ters of *Don Manuel*, in "*She Would and She Would not*," and of old *Philpot*, in the "*Citizen*," together with that of *Sir Fretful Plagiary*, are sufficient examples of the ease with which Mr. M. alters his years, and of the general excellencies of his old age.

Those who have had the pleasure to hear MATHEWS sing, will think the English language the most harmonious imaginable. None of our harsh consonants, and rough cadences, impede MATHEWS—they are all compelled to run glibly on in the indiscriminate velocity of his utterance—and if the sense did not suffer a little by making them a *little* indistinct, we should perhaps be better satisfied. We always think he is running a race with the orchestra, to try whether he can get done before the music: and therefore we think Mr. M. is rather a *comical* singer, than a comic one, as the matter stands.

In conclusion, MATHEWS is one of the chief ornaments of the present stage; his talents are as varied, as they are great; his sketches are always rendered with inimitable fidelity, and in fact, he must be considered as a genuine descendant of PROTEUS and the worthy successor of FOOTE—he is indeed

"——A fellow of infinite jest, a man
Of most excellent fancy." (1)

MR. MATHEWS is the son of Mr. MATHEWS, late a bookseller in the Strand, and was born June 28, 1776. He and an elder brother were educated at *Merchant Taylor's* school; the latter having been designed for one of the liberal professions, and our hero for his father's business. Accordingly, his brother was sent to the university of Cambridge. When his studies there were completed, he returned to London, became a templar, and was at length called to the bar. He was induced, by a prospect of great success in his profession, to go to the Westindies: he consequently left his native country to settle at Tobago in the year 1801, where he soon fell a victim to one of the disea-

(1) For further notices of Mr. MATHEWS, vide vol. i 52. 311. vol. ii. 254. vol. iii. &c. &c.

ses peculiar to that climate, dying in four months after his arrival.

At the age of fourteen, MATHEWS was regularly bound apprentice to his father, and, as proposed, intended to pursue his business. He, however, continued at school till seventeen; during this time he took a great dislike to trade, and imbibed a very strong partiality for the stage. It is remarkable, that at this time he had not seen a play, but contracted his *penchant* merely by reading them, and associating with young men, his school-fellows, who gave him warm and gratifying descriptions of the effect produced on them by theatrical representations. His father, from religious motives, did not suffer his children to visit the theatres.

About this time our stage-struck hero went to an evening French school. Private plays were proposed, and he eagerly joined in the wish of the other scholars, that they should be put into practice. "*The Distressed Mother*" was the first performance, and at a pastry-cook's shop in the Strand, up one pair of stairs, he made his *début* in the humble character of *Phœnix*: and we believe Mr. ELLISTON made his first appearance the same night in *Pyrrhus*.

The ensuing winter he played the *Chaplain*, in "*The Orphan*," and *Mr. Lovel*, in "*A Quarter of an Hour before Dinner*." His father's servant, who witnessed his performance, having said "that he liked young master the best among them," MATHEWS thought it a presage of his future greatness, and he secretly determined to make the stage his profession.

In the year 1790, he saw '*The Orphan*' and '*Retaliation*' at Covent Garden, which was the first public performance he ever visited: this fanned the flame, and every play that he afterwards saw added fresh fuel to the fire. That inimitable comedian, PARSONS, was however his idol; and from his admiration of him, at the age of fourteen, he resolved on the study of old men. He shortly after played *Old Dailey*, which determined him to consider that his forte, and to this hour he prefers that line of acting to any other.

In the winter of 1793, he made his first public appearance at Richmond, in the characters of *Richmond* and *Bowkitt*.

In March, 1794, he played the former characters, and *Old Doiley*, at Canterbury. The success he fancied he met with, made him determine to engage as soon as possible. At this time, the agent of Mr. DALY, the Irish manager, being in town, he waited on him, and with the promise of playing low comedy characters, he was engaged. The famous Mr. COOKE having accompanied our hero at this time to Dublin, began very kindly to offer him that advice whereby he might improve in his profession as an actor, and conduct himself through life as a respectable man.—The principal theme to the novitiate was—"to avoid the too general dissipation which players fall into; remembering to steer clear of intemperance; and, that *sobriety* was the leading feature to become distinguished and great!" During this lecture, jug after jug was emptied, in rapid succession, till the punch had nearly *punched* out all morality from the pericranium of COOKE; and who now began to exhibit the various passions (not exactly after Le BRUN) for the improvement of his protegée.—Enquiring, after each *distortion* of his face, what was the distinct passion he had thus expressed? MATHEWS was completely at a loss to *know* what he meant, from the inebriated *look* of his master, and generally answered wrong, acknowledging that the effects of the whiskey had rather *deranged* his comprehension; but, when the mighty *Richard* declared his last attempt was "*Love*," his countenance appeared so diametrically opposite to that soft, insinuating expression that MATHEWS burst out into a loud laugh, which so disconcerted GEORGE FREDERIC, that all the apologies MATHEWS could make did scarcely allay his indignation at his pupil's supposed rudeness. The heroine of the whiskey-shop (*Judy Burns*) having declared to Mr. COOKE that he had now got the *last* jug for the night, retired to her inner cabin to repose for the night, leaving her guests to finish the evening, Mr. COOKE being an old and good customer, *ceremony* was not necessary. But, alas! it was not long before this concluding jug was *drained* of its contents—and then "it was so good" that it must be replenished. "Another jug, quick, quick, quick, Judy," was loudly vociferated by GEORGE FREDERIC. "No more to night, sir," answered the hostess from her pillow. "Well, we'll see

that presently—another jug, Judy?" "Mr. COOKE, you shall have no more this night!" MATHEWS in vain remonstrated on the impropriety of obtaining any more, and attempted an *exit*; when the disappointed tragedian, grown furious from the copious draughts of the *whiskey* which he had swallowed, immediately threw the candlestick after him, calling out to the landlady, after smashing the jug on the floor all to pieces, "do you hear that, Judy?"—"yes, and faith, I do: and you'll be sorry enough for such conduct to-morrow!" He then broke the chairs, tables, looking-glasses, &c. exclaiming at the end of each, "d'ye hear that, Judy?" And when completely exhausted with rage and madness, he sallied out into the streets, where after encountering some difficulties in his way home, he was found the next evening in his bed literally dead, from the effects of the bruises he had received, and the severe effects which the debauch had left upon his frame.

Mr. MATHEWS made his *entré* in Dublin, on the 19th of June, 1794, in *Jacob Gawky* and *Lingo;* his success appeared to him very great; his songs in the farce were all *encored*, and he repeated the character that day se'nnight: however, Mr. DALY wanted a younker to play what are theatrically termed *walking gentlemen*, and this being the line he had allotted him before his appearance, his success in another line had no weight with him, consequently his first part was *Lamp*, in "*Wild Oats.*" From this time he played *Beaufort*, in "*The Citizen,*" *Paris*, in "*Romeo,*" *Albany*, in "*King Lear,*" &c. After suffering every misery under the management of a man, whose name is a terror to actors, for eighteen months, he quitted him, meaning to return to London; but having left Cork for Bristol, he was put into Wales by contrary winds. Here by chance he saw a play at Swansea—proposed to perform—opened in *Lingo*, (October, 1795)—succeeded—was engaged—and staid three years with Mr. MASTERMAN, the worthy manager of the Swansea, Carmarthen, Monmouth, Cardiff, &c. theatres. During this time he played the whole of the principal low comedy.

On Mr. EMERY being engaged at Covent Garden, he applied to the late Mr. WILKINSON, the York manager, offering himself as a low comedian:—"Low comedian,"

said Mr. WILKINSON, looking at our *tall* hero;—"Yes, sir, low comedian."—"Well, I see you have comic abilities—so enough, if you please—you may spare your ludicrous faces for the present." Mr. WILKINSON, however, soon found his mistake, as Mr. MATHEWS cannot avoid twisting his mouth. He came out on the York boards, in 1798, in *Silky* and *Lingo*, and remained in the company till 1803, being a great favourite. He was then engaged at Mr. COLMAN'S theatre, where he made his first appearance in *Jabal* and *Lingo*, which characters he had the honour of repeating before the king. Of this theatre he soon became the hero in the comic line.

In 1797 he married Miss STRONG, of Exeter (not an actress.) She died in May, 1802. She was author of a volume of poems, and several novels.

In 1803, he married Mis JACKSON, (his present wife, and pupil of KELLY and CROUCH) of the York company.(1)

---

(1) This lady is the daughter of Mr. JACKSON, who had the honour to be a pupil of the celebrated FOOTE; but his professional efforts were of short duration. He died at Bath, while she was an infant. On the stage of that city, Miss JACKSON made her first appearance. One of her earliest performances was the *Page*, in the musical farce of the "*Purse;*" a character which, with the *person* of a child, requires more than a child's *capacity* to do justice to it in the representation. The infant *débûtante* acquitted herself, to the perfect satisfaction of her audience, and afterwards rendered herself acceptable in some other parts of a similar description.

At a very early age, she indicated a partiality to music, and her voice affording every promise that with proper cultivation it might prove the means, of obtaining for her both profit and distinction, she was articled to Mr. KELLY of Drury-lane theatre. The tuition of that gentleman and Mrs. CROUCH, assisted by a good ear and correct taste on the part of the pupil, effected so rapid an improvement, that she was very soon introduced on the boards of Drury-lane theatre, and performed *Juba* in the "*Prize*," *Dick* in the "*Shipwreck*," and other juvenile parts, which had previ-

From the Haymarket he was engaged at Covent Garden, where he divided the sovereign sway in comedy with the inimitable LISTON. After some time—disagreements arose between him and the managers—and, to use his own words "suspecting his services were not required—'like a well-bred dog, who walks quietly down stairs when he sees preparations on foot for kicking him into the street,' he followed the example of his betters and *resigned*." For

ously been in the possession of young WELSH. She also played *Ghita*, in the "*Siege of Belgrade*," for the benefit of Mrs. CROUCH. Such was her proficiency, that, at the expiration of three years only of her articles, she accepted a regular engagement in the York company, where she appeared in the winter of 1799, in the characters of *Amanthis* and *Rosina*. Here she immediately became a favourite, and sustained all the principal operatic characters, as well as the heroines in sentimental comedy, for which the delicacy of her form, her youth, and a pleasing style of delivery, peculiarly qualified her.

In this company, besides the advantage of professional practice, Miss JACKSON found in TATE WILKINSON, the manager, a friend who was always ready to afford her the best advice and assistance. That veteran treated her with the indulgence which her sex and youth required, and, considering her as an innocent and unprotected female confided to his care, his conduct to her in all respects, was that of an affectionate parent to his child.

In this circuit, Miss JACKSON received the most signal marks of attention and regard from the natives of Yorkshire, whom she never mentions, without expressing the most lively and grateful sense of their kindnesses.

After her marriage with Mr. M., she accompanied him to the Haymarket, when Mr. COLMAN, resolved on establishing a company independent of the winter houses, invited her husband, who had acquired considerable reputation as an actor, to take the lead in comedy at the little theatre.

From thence she went to Drury-lane, where she was brought forward in several very difficult characters, and, in all, her vocal efforts were honoured with the most encouraging and unanimous plaudits of the audience.

some time after this, he amused himself by "wandering about the provinces," and at length his friends and the public were most agreeably surprised at the beginning of April, 1818, by the appearance of bills and advertisements, announcing that they would find him "*At Home*," at the English Opera House, on Thursday, the 2nd, with an entertainment, called "*Mail Coach Adventures*, an *Experimental Lecture on Philosophy*," &c. As the address which he gave on this occasion is somewhat explanatory of the circumstances which caused his secession from the regular drama we give it entire:

ADDRESS.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Appearing before you in this novel way, it will naturally be expected that I should give some explanation of the motive that has induced me to make so bold an attempt as that of offering you a whole evenings entertainment by my own individual exertions. It is simply this—Public approbation has long since flattered me into the belief that I have some pretensions to the title of a comic actor. The vanity of mankind is easily roused by the encouragement of popular applause, and I am not aware that actors, *though proverbially modest*, are more exempt from vanity than patriots and statesmen. Fully gratified in this particular, it has therefore been my greatest ambition to appear before you in the legitimate shape of a regular comedian. Circumstances, however, which I could neither controul nor account for, have deprived me of the opportunity of so doing. In the mean time I have been frequently urged by my friends to attempt an entertainment by myself, and reminded with what success the celebrated DIBDIN had during several winters kept audiences together by his single exertions. Still I preferred the exercise of my profession as a member of the National Theatre; and could I have been indulged in the first wish of my heart, that of appearing before you in characters of legitimate comedy, in that capacity I should probably have remained to the end of my days, without ever attempting to exhibit that little knack for distinct mimicry, to which I since have unfortunately been doomed.

In the latter part of my last winter's engagement it became evident to me that all hope of attaining my favourite object was at an end. I scarcely ever had the opportunity of appearing before you but in characters solely devoted to the peculiarities of mimicry. The press perhaps unconsciously took its tone from the managers, and a part of it —(I do not say the whole, for I should be very ungrateful if I did,)—but a part fell into the habit of designating me a mere mimic, and no actor. It will however be observed, that the best authorities have characterised the Drama by the title of the Mimic Art, and I humbly conceive that without mimicry there can be no acting. It is the very essence of personation, and he who cannot personate the character imagined by an author, in my mind can never be an actor: if this argument which I have presumed to advance be admitted, it is surely a strange deduction, that a man ceases to be an actor because he personates half-a-dozen characters in a drama instead of one. Be this as it may, such has been the opinion given in my particular case. The Public naturally supposed the peculiarities of my cast of characters to be my own taste. I therefore hope I shall be excused for taking this my only opportunity of avowing my firm attachment to the legitimate drama of the country, which I devoutly hope may one day be restored to us. I trust that it is clearly understood that I have spoken not of *motives* but *effects*. I have not the slightest disposition to attribute my treatment to any illiberal feeling. It was probably accidental, but the facts are undeniable, and the results to me the same as if they had been premeditated. During the last season, which consisted of 239 nights, I had only the opportunity of appearing 46, and *not once* in a character in a comedy. It is true that 12 nights out of those 46 I rode one of the finest horses the stud of the theatre could afford; (1) but even this, though I certainly was *exalted* by it, did not satisfy my ambition. During the rest of the time, to use a theatrical term, I was laid upon the *shelf*, but I was too fond of my profession and public applause to lie quietly there; I grew restless and

(1) As *Varbel* in "*Lodoiska*."—Ed.

fidgetty; and like a good soldier, who feels he has not yet done half his duty, whenever I peeped from my uneasy quarters, and saw a muster of the dramatic corps, "my soul was in arms and eager for the fray," in which I might prove my zeal and my devotion in your service; but this was not permitted. At length I suspected my services were not required at all, and therefore, "like a well-bred dog, who walks quietly down stairs when he sees prepations on foot for kicking him into the street," I followed the example of my betters and *resigned;* rather than run the risk of being turned out, I retired. It was my own act. I complain of no one. I only assert my right to make use of whatever talent may have been bestowed upon me to the best advantage to myself; for if I can only be allowed to exhibit those talents in a National Theatre which I once wished to be confined to the amusement of my private friends; if I cannot be allowed by chance like other actors in the usual way: if the regular practitioners will drive me to quackery, why I will sell my medicines on my own account; and they shall call me mountebank if they like; but if such I am, like one, *I will have a stage to myself.* My vanity, if they please, has led me to make the attempt. It is a bold one, but the encouragement is in your hands. If I can stand single-handed against the hosts of superior entertainment by which I am surrounded, it will be a feather in my cap. It is in your power to place the feather there, and if it is once planted, be assured it shall be worn gratefully as well as triumphantly—I feel however considerable anxiety for the result, and unaffectedly confess my fearful diffidence of my own abilities. The difficulties of my task are so numerous and obvious, that were I a stranger in the land I should abandon it in despair; but when I look round me, and reflect on the numerous instances of kindness I have received—gratitude for past favours, and zeal to merit new ones, conspire to banish those apprehensions which an undertaking like mine had so naturally excited; and I enter on my task without more apology, or further adding to a preface which I fear has already too long imposed upon your patience."

This address, which Mr. M. delivered with much force

and evidently indignant feeling, was frequently interrupted by the loudest applause.

The unprecedent encouragement Mr. MATHEWS met with in that performance, and his subsequent ones, preclude the necessity of any further remark.(1)

---

(1) The following anecdote will give those, who have not witnessed his astonishing imitative powers, a very good idea of them :—it occurred at a supper-party at his house, in Great Russell Street, at which DOWTON and others were present :

"This evening we had an additional proof of the wonderful powers of imitation possessed by MATHEWS.—There was a man of the name of KNAPP, formerly a respectable member of society, and a tolerable actor; but from idle dissipated habits, he was now become a sort of travelling mendicant, collecting from the sons and daughters of THESPIS, contributions towards the support of his neccessities, real or pretended.

"In the early part of DOWTON's theatrical career, he and I were in company with this person; and he frequently applied to the Drury-Lane Green Room for pecuniary aid, through the medium of his old acquaintance DOWTON. At length his applications became so numerous, that, extensive as DOWTON's liberality was, and no man's can be more so, he became tired of affording relief to one who had lost all sense of duty towards himself, and the very name of KNAPP threw him into a frenzy; for though one of the best-natured creatures in the world, DOWTON is at the same time one of the most irritable; and the disgust he felt at the frequent calls of this man, generally in a state of inebriety, proved an excellent subject for MATHEWS; and the Green Room was often kept in a roar of laugther, from the supposed approach of KNAPP.

"But to return to our supper friends. The cloth was drawn; MATHEWS had given some of his excellent stories, in his best style; and DOWTON's round, good-natured face, exhibited a full participation of this feast of Momus;

when the servant anounced that a person wished to speak with him.

"With me! with me!" cried DOWTON; "who is it, and what can he want with me at this time of night?"

"He is a very suspicious looking man," replied the servant, "shabbily dressed, and I think intoxicated."

"Why did he not send his name?" enquired DOWTON.

"He did, Sir; he says you are an old friend, and know him well; his name is KNAPP."

"To describe DOWTON's countenance is impossible. Passion deprived him of articulation; he sputtered, and stormed, and stamped, and was on the point of running down stairs, with a fixed determination to kick KNAPP into the street, when MATHEWS interfered; "He could not," he said, "permit the poor man to be inhospitably treated in his house, and would himself endeavour to get rid of him." DOWTON now gave full vent to his passion; "the scoundrel," exclaimed he, as he paced the room, "am I to be haunted to death by this prince of paupers? The d——d rascal, not content with picking my pocket, exposes me to all my friends, and follows me wherever I go; but I'll stop him; I'll apply to a magistrate.

"A noise on the stairs gave us reason to suppose that Mr. KNAPP was forcing his way into the room, and we could plainly distinguish the following dialogue:—

"*Mathews.* Really KNAPP I wish you would be persuaded to go home. DOWTON is not here, you may depend upon't."

"*Knapp.* My dear fellow, I know you wish me well, but my friend DOWTON appointed me to meet him here, to receive a subscription he meant to set on foot after supper; so pray let me go up, for I must see him."—At the word *subscription*, DOWTON foamed with rage, but as MATHEWS had denied him being in the house, he restrained himself, and the dialogue proceeded.

"*Mathews.* Mr. KNAPP, you must give me leave to be master of my own house, and I insist upon your going down stairs."

"*Knapp.* My dear fellow, don't be positive; I am going to my engagement in the morning, and my friend Dow owes me a trifle of money, which I must have."

"You lie, you scoundrel!" exclaimed DOWTON, unable to contain himself any longer. "I owe you money, you ungrateful vagabond? you—you—you"—and in a paroxysm of rage which deprived him of utterance, he would have run down stairs, if we had not prevented him.

"*Knapp.* Ah; his voice! I knew he was here! Dow, my dear friend, I must and will shake hands with you."

"Here a struggle took place on the stairs, followed by blows; at length MATHEWS exclaimed, foul play! foul play;"—DOWTON now broke from us, vociferating "let me come at him! I'll teach the beggarly scoundrel to follow me!"—But judge what was the general astonishment, when we rushed out, followed by Mrs. MATHEWS with a light, to find DOWTON collaring MATHEWS, and that KNAPP had never been upon the spot at all."

NUGÆ DRAMATICÆ.

No. VII.

BY G. J. DE WILDE.

THE RETURN.

"Oh that hallowed form is ne'er forgot
Which first love has traced
Still it lingering haunts the greenest spot
On memory's waste."

MOORE.

SCENE.—*A romantic Church Yard, situated on an eminence—in the distance a beautiful and extensive view of the surrounding country—the spire of a Village Church appears above the trees.*

Euston. Yes, 'tis the very spot where twenty years
Gone by, I stood with Evandale to take
A farewell look towards my native village.
Beneath yon elm I waited him, while he
Bade farewell to his Mary, little deeming
It was his last, poor fellow;—such a day
As this it was, the sun shone hot as now

And all was still and silent, save the chirp
Of the gay grasshopper and gurgling rill
That trickled at my feet—I look'd as now
Far o'er the lovely landscape, the white tops
Of the dear tenements of him who gave
Me being and of her my soul adored
Were shining in the sunbeam—e'en as now
I turn'd my dazzled sight away, mine eyes
Suffused with tears, and on the green I saw
My friend and Mary,—I shall ne'er forget
The tenderness with which she hung upon
Her lover—it half madden'd me to view it
For I had none to weep at my departure,
Nor pray for my return.—My father, mother,
And my poor sister slept within the grave
And faithless Clara was another's bride.
I stood a solitary thing on earth,
I felt it, and I wept in nameless anguish.
Years have gone by and I am here again
More desolate than ever. Evandale
Is number'd with the dead, and now, to me
What is the wealth which I have heap'd together
Who have no wife—no child—no friend to share it.—
'Tis worthless——worthless.
I have a task to execute—a sad one,
And yet it must be done—poor Mary, 'twill
Be dreadful news indeed to her, unless,
Like others, she too is a changing one.—

Enter CLARA *with a basket of flowers on her arm, takes a bouquet and offers it in silence to* EUSTON.

Euston. I do not need your flowers my good woman,
Were I to place them on my breast, they would
But mock the wither'd ones within—but I
Have that which may not be to you so worthless,
Take it. *(Giving her money.)*
Clara. I cannot thank you Sir, as——
Euston. Peace
I need it not.——Are you a native here?
Clara. Yon little cottage, in the vale beneath
Gave the first air I breath'd

Euston. Then you perchance
Can give me tidings of one Mary Marston—?
Clara. Yon little hillock of green turf contains
All that remains of Mary.
Euston. God be praised.
She has escaped a deep—a bitter pang.
Clara. You knew her Sir? Knew you young Evandale?
Euston. He was my only friend—*now* I have none.
Clara. (*With agitation*) There was one with him when he parted hence.
Who——
Euston. Francis Euston?
Clara. (*Eagerly*) Then you knew him Sir?
Euston. I should do so, we never were apart.
Clara. Does he still live?
Euston. His *heart* has long been dead.
Clara. (*Trembling*) In his last moments did he utter aught,
Of one he lov'd and who deserted him,
For one she could not love, to gratify
The wishes of a father, then, indeed,
Unkind, though in all else too good—too fond.
Euston. 'Tis false! she could not have sacrificed
Her heart's best dearest feelings—oh! no, no,
She was a shallow, cold and changing one,
Unworthy of the wretch who lov'd her,
And whom she rendered miserable.—But,
Who art thou woman, who thus prob'st my heart,
Awakening feelings that have slept—and now
Will drive me into madness?—God of Mercies.
'Tis Clara's self!——
Clara. Francis! my wrong'd love Francis.
(Sinks into his arms.)

1824.

TARLTON.

Mr. DRAMA.

In vol. 4th, pages 278, 344 and 350 of your Theatrical Magazine, is a memoir of TARLTON, and in order to render your account of him complete, I have been induced to transcribe the following Anecdotes, which have escaped you, to insert, if you think proper, in your next number,

I am, Sir,

Your most obt. Servt.

Hull, August 10th, 1824. THOMAS A. CROSS.

RICHARD TARLTON, or TARLETON, was the earliest English Comedian of great celebrity. He was born at Condover, in the County of Salop, but when, or at what period he commenced actor is unknown. SIR RICHARD BAKER in his *Theatrum Redivivum*, speaking of PRYNNE, says "let him try it when he will, and come upon the *stage* himself with all the scurrility of the wife of *Bath*, with all the ribaldry of POGGIUS, or BOCCACE, yet, I dare affirm, he shall never give that contentment to beholders, as honest TARLTON did, though he said never a word."—Implying that the very aspect of TARLTON delighted the spectator before he uttered a syllable; and in his chronicle SIR RICHARD, after giving due praise to ALLEN and BURBAGE, adds: "And to make their comedies complete, RICHARD TARLTON, who for the part called the clowns part, never had his match, and never will have." FULLER says "much of his merriment lay in his very looks and actions, according to the epitaph written under him.

Hic situs est cujus poterat vox, actio, vultur
Ex Heraclito riddere Democritum.

Indeed the self same words spoken by another would hardly move a merry man to smile, which uttered by him would force a sad soul to laughter."

That he possessed the *Vis Comica* in a super-eminent degree, the following epigram assures us.

"As TARLTON, when his head was onely seene,
The Fire-house-doore, and Tapistrie betweene
Set all the multitude in such a laughter
They could not hold for scarce an hour after.
So (Sir) I set you (as I promised) forth
That all the world may wonder at your worth"
PEACHAM'S *Thalias Banquet*, 8vo. 1620.

An instance of his humour off the stage is recorded in "*The Abortive of an idle hour*," 4to. 1620.

"Crosse me not Liza, ne'ther be so perte,
For if thou dost, I'll sit upon thy skerte."

"TARLTON cut off all his skirts because none should sit upon them"—In a very rare old pamphlet entitled *Kind Heartes Dreame*, by HENRY CHETTLE, 4to. no date, but published in December 1592, he is thus described. "The next, by his sute of russet, his buttoned cap, his taber, his standing on his toe, and other tricks, I knew to be either the body or resemblance of TARLTON, who living for his pleasant conceits was of all men liked, and dying, for mirth left not his like." So great was his privilege with, and power over the audience, that he would enter between the acts, nay sometimes between the scenes on the stage, and excite merriment by any species of buffoonery that occurred to him. After the play was finished *themes* were given to him by some of the audiences, which to their great entertainment, he would descant upon: in his "*jeasts*" we find the following.

"I remember I was once at a play in the country where, as TARLTON'S use was, the play being over, every one so pleased, threw up his theame; amongst all the rest one was read to this effect, word for word:"

TARLTON I am one of thy friends, and none of thy foes
Then pr'y thee tell me how thou cam'st by that flat nose.

To which he gave extempore reply in some lines of loose verse the point of which may be conceived from the latter part of this anecdote, in the same book.

"There was one BANKES in the time of TARLTON, who served the EARL of ESSEX, and had a horse of strange qualities, and being at the Cross Keyes, in Gracious Streete, getting money with him, as he was mightily resorted to, TARLTON then (with his fellowes) playing at the Bull by, came into the Cross Keyes amongst many people to see fashions: which BANKES perceiving, to make the people laugh, saies, *Signior*, to his horse, *go fetch me the veryest fool in the company*. The jade comes immediately and with his mouth draws TARLTON forth—TARLTON, with merry words said nothing but *God-a-mercy horse*—In the end TARLTON seeing the people laugh so; was angry inwardly and said, *Sir, had I the power over your horse, as you have, I would do more than that. Whate'er it be,* said BANKES *to please him, I will charge him do it.* Then saies TARLTON, *charge him to bring me the veryest rogue in the company. He shall* saies BANKES: *Signior,* saies he, *bring Master* TARLTON *the veryest rogue in the company*. The horse leads his master to him—Then *God-a-mercy horse indeed,* saies TARLTON. The people had much ado to keep peace, but BANKES and TARLTON had liked to have squared, and the horse by to give aime. But ever after it was a by-word throughout London—*God-a-mercy horse,* and is to this day."

BEN JONSON in *The Introduction* to his comedy of *Bartholemew Fair,* makes the stage keeper speak thus of him "I kept the stage in Master TARLTON's time, I thank my stars—Ho! an' that man had liv'd to have played in Bartholomew Fair you should ha' seen him ha' come in, and ha' been cosened i' the cloth-quarter, so finely!"

After an eccentric and too free life, he died a penitent in 1588, and was buried in St. Leonard's, Shoreditch, September the third of that year, as appears by the parish register. About this period were licensed as we learn from the entries in the books of the Stationers company, "A sorrowfull newe sonnette, intitled Tarlton's Recantation upon this theame gyven him by a gent at the Bel Savage, without Ludgate (nowe or els never) beinge the last theme he songe:"

In *Wits Bedlam,* 8vo. 1617, is the following epitaph,

On Tarlton.

"Here within this sullen earth
Lies Dick Tarlton, Lord of mirth:
Who in his grave still, laughing, gapes,
Syth all *Clownes* since have beene his apes
Earst he of Clownes to learne still sought;
But now they learne of him they taught.
By art far past the Principall,
The *Counterfit* is, so, worth all."

MR. MACREADY.

Mr. Drama,

Perhaps no one actor, in modern times, has produced such a contrariety of opinions, respecting his merits, as Mr. Macready; perhaps none has had to struggle with such prejudices and party feeling; but, that he is a performer of merit and first rate talent is universally allowed. Having adopted, in a great measure, the style of a predecessor, whose fame in the annals of the drama has stood and will stand unshaken, notwithstanding all rivalry, however powerful; we think it but reasonable to suppose that this want of enthusiasm in the public, and more especially in the diurnal critics, for the performances of Mr. Macready, may be referred to previously formed views of excellence, attached to the only one who can be named a rival in his peculiar walk to tragic fame. Again, it is well known, that Mr. M. from a consciousness of superior literary attainments, or from an innate, and it must be confessed, unwarrantable degree of pride, refuses to associate with his brother performers; many of whom are connected, though remotely, with the public press, and who, doubtless, are not unwilling to communicate any thing unfavourable of one, who considers it *infra dig.* to be "part and parcel" among them. As we are not personally acquainted with Mr. Macready, and can have no interest in any matter behind the curtain, we shall lay before our readers a few candid remarks on Mr. M.'s style, at the same time noticing a few of his performances by way of illustration.

One principal fault, in our opinion, in Mr. MACREADY'S acting, is, an inattention to the business of the scene; in fact, his eyes are too frequently fixed on the audience instead of regarding alone, what is going on on the stage: in almost every character is this observable, though, it may appear strange, in his representation of *Shyloch*,(1) generally considered unsuccessful, this fault is not at all apparent. Again there is a stiffness of manner in nearly all his performances, which may at first sight appear dignified, and, no doubt, that is the impression Mr. M. wishes to convey, but we beg to submit to him, that true dignity is more nearly allied to nature, to a conscious superiority of intellect, giving to its professor the action and language that power to over-awe, and controul inferior beings, who may not lack any portion of animal courage, but who, possessing it alone must always be content to follow rather than lead. This wide difference of mind over the animal functions is strikingly exhibited in the portraitures, drawn by SHAKSPEARE, in the characters of *Coriolanus* and *Aufidius*: the one a mere machine, headstrong and injudicious, the other commanding respect, and exciting the usual concomitant of respect—envy. Here then is the defect of all the Roman characters by Mr. MACREADY; *Virginius* perhaps excepted. *Coriolanus* and *Caius Gracchus*, though vivid and splendid in their other qualities, in his hands more closely resemble our expression of passion and feeling than is consistent with our ideas of Roman heroism and patriotism. Mr. MACREADY makes a Roman too much like an ordinary being, while we are only satisfied with a god-like superiority not to be found in the heroes of the present degenerated day:—indeed no actor has at all realized our

(1) We are surprized Mr. M. has only played *Shyloch* but once: it is certainly not so striking as that of Mr. KEAN, but there is a repose and originality in it, differing widely from the usual style of either performer, true to nature. The Jew as represented by Mr. K. may be compared to a highly coloured painting, imposing and effective; that of Mr. M. to a sketch, struck off by the hand of a master and capable of improvement

ideas of the Roman, since the time of Mr. J. KEMBLE; not that we would advise Mr. M. to relinquish such characters; on the contrary, we are persuaded that with a little attention to the requisite that is in his power to possess, he may make them most perfect and masterly performances, not inferior to those of his great predecessor, and far above any effort of any actor now on the boards. Once more and we have done with finding fault. Why does Mr. M. make so little use of his upper and lower extremities, while his body appears convulsed with passion? It would much heighten the effect, were he to make every limb subservient to his purpose—indeed to move about rather more, for very few of the passions have the effect of paralizing the limbs, but on the contrary, they prove a powerful stimulus to increased action. We however must qualify our remarks by equally reprobating too redundant action, which is quite as unnatural as the quietude above mentioned.

The great requisites of an actor are—judgment, taste, feeling, and expression; without them it is impossible to interest an enlightened audience. All these qualifications Mr. MACREADY possesses in an eminent degree. His conception of a character is always correct, though perhaps not in every detail, yet the whole is singularly accordant with our pre-conceived views: if there is any character in which he fails in rightly conceiving, it is *Hamlet*; for he does not keep on that steady melancholy with which the poet invests him; think as we please respecting his madness. No one we have seen, except Mr. YOUNG, at all approaches what it appears to us *Hamlet* should be. There is a great degree of elegance, independent of the stiffness before alluded to, in the manner of Mr. MACREADY; in graceful action and delicacy of sentiment he is inferior to none. With the exception of Mr. KEAN there is perhaps no one actor, who so completely identifies himself with the character he is enacting: he appears different in all: in fact he cannot be charged with the least degree of mannerism:—to exemplify this we have only to compare his *Coriolanus* with *Virginius*, *Wolsey* with *Macbeth*, *Zanga* with *Othello*, &c. &c. He ceases to be Mr. MACREADY and is *pro tempore* the person he represents. In expres-

sion of countenance Mr. M. must yield to Mr. KEAN, but to none other: he has not such command over the muscles of the face, nor is his eye so prominent as Mr. KEAN's; but his voice appears to be more flexible and under more controul; at one time the piping lover, at another the kind father, then the tyrant, and then again the noble warrior. It requires a variation of tone to convey a just idea of these several characters, and Mr. M. stands pre-eminent in this particular,—he is master, entire master, of all the passions, but he is least effective in his delineation of love, but in some of its variations he is proudly successful. In revenge, where can we find his equal in *Zanga*; in fear, than in *Macbeth*. How is it Mr. M. always contrives to die so well? his deaths are appalling and dreadful. On the whole, though he has many faults (and they are the faults of true genius,) he has on the other hand such towering excellencies, that we are compelled to come to the conclusion, that though he may have been equalled in many of his characters, in very few has he been excelled.

June 21, 1824. * * * * *

DRAMATIC EXCERPTA, No. VII.

1.—*French Comedy.*

MOLIERE, the father of French comedy, possessed a deeper insight into human character, than any other French dramatic writer, Comic or Tragic.—He was full of wit, gaiety, and sprightliness—and by his observation, turned all he saw to profit.

MOLIERE might produce an *Avare*, or a *Tartuffe* or an *Alceste*, or a *Bourgeois Gentilhomme*: but he could never create an *Ariel*, a *Caliban*—a *Falstaff*—*Malvolio*, or a *Touchstone*:—In point of individuality, *Tartuffe* is MOLIERE's masterpiece:—all his lovers are alike: all his young ladies, minutely resemble each other:—all his valets have the same features, of which *Scapin* is the full caricature:—It is in good sterling dramatic wit, that MOLIERE stands most pre-eminent.—In France, no one has come near him, in this quality—not excepting RACINE, in his *Plaideurs*.

The *Sganarelle* of MOLIERE'S "*Cocu imaginaire*," is a perfect model of that kind of wit, in which a comic author may indulge, to place his personage in the most ludicrous lights, without making him the butt of his own sarcasms:—*Figaro* is a *bel esprit* by profession, as well as *Poet—Farrier—Valet—Barber*, &c.

The admirable scene in the "*Misanthrope*"—(to which by-the-bye, the author of the "*School for Scandal*" was not a little indebted—although he surpasses it) is replete with the best kind of dramatic wit,—and no writer of any age or country, ever excelled it—except SHERIDAN: The French author, who, in drawing character, approached the nearest to MOLIERE, was perhaps, LESAGE in his "*Turcaret*."—The rich and fanciful Spanish theatre, though replete with more varied personages than the French, cannot yet vie with the British: and the German, which might be supposed to have had many resources—cannot be compared with our own.

The *Alexandre* of RACINE, is far behind the *Alexander* of LEE; and *Clytus* never could have appeared on the Parisian stage, for LEWIS 14th had no such honest old tippling courtier, and since the days of the Emperor WENCESLAS, who astonished the French court by his inebriety—a drunken prince has not been publicly seen in France—except the Regent Duke of Orleans.—From the time of ADDISON—a dejection of pathos has become upon the English stage—the breath of France, has blighted British genius; and until all the doctrines of that school, which can do no more than dabble in the pettiness of nature, are discarded; until we frankly return to our own good old principles, and feel once more, that our hearts and the hearts of all who are men, are more romantic than classic, we shall not recover the vigour we have lost.—Our comedy has declined—even more than our tragedy—by an imitation of France.—The baleful influence of French example, was also felt in the German theatre, which began like all others, with religious subjects:—There was a kind of bonhommie, characteristic of this nation in their early stage, which is not to be met with elsewhere:—Their plays were performed by honest citizens, little skilled in the art of assuming fictitious characters:—OPIZ gave a new form to the German

stage, and translated some Greek and Italian plays. ANDREAS GRYPHIUS succeeded OPIZ—he has been compared to SHAKSPEARE by many—but is now forgotten.—At the beginning of the 18th century, GOTTSCHED introduced French imitation, in which he was followed by GELLERT—ELIAS SCHLEGEL—CRONEGH and WEISSE, whose works are particularly excellent in the *Genre ennuyeux*.—The two men who completed the emancipation of the German stage, and gave it a character for nationality, were GOETHE, and SCHILLER. A constant fault with the Germans is, a morbid longing after originality:—they think it shameful to tread a path, in which the trace of man can be found. There is still a character of infancy in the German theatre. Servile imitation of the French, delayed its early progress and developement. The fatal rage of originality, turned it out of the course of reason, and its best efforts, are those in which it has endeavoured to copy nature, through the faithful medium of the British stage.

2.—*Shakespeare's Characters.*

The prodigious excellence of SHAKSPEARE, and what raises him far above every other poet, is, that all his characters are as individuals:—*Macbeth* and *Richard III.* belong to the class of ambitious men, who would undertake any thing to gratify their ruling passion:—SHYLOCK and IAGO belong to the vindictive class:—*Othello* and *Leontes* to the jealous—yet nothing can be more different than the details of those passions in each personage:—The drama, whose business it is to set before our eyes the scenes of real life—must give those scenes as they occur in real life—as the operations of the individuals represented.

3.—*The Spanish Stage.*

The first attempt at dramatic composition in Spain was—as it is every where else—imperfect and barbarous: and *Mingo Rebulgo* was still more extravagant than *Gammer Gurton's Needle*. *Celestina* tragi-comedia de Calisto y Melibea, of the fifteenth century, was in twenty-one acts. The story is like *Clarissa Harlowe*, and calculated to put fe-

male innocence upon its guard against the corruptions of the world. The catastrophe is most tragic—the lovers end their lives—the one being assassinated—the other thrown off a high tower :—all the servants are murdered into the bargain. NAHARRO and LOPE DE RUEDA struck out new lights of their own, and thus opened the course, which the theatre of their nation has continued to run most worthily. The poems of JUAN DE LA CUERA are certainly the effusion of a much vaster mind than the art poëtique of Boileau became the dramatic code of his country : and is that which CERVANTES, LOPE DE VEGA, ARGENSOLA, VERULES, MONTALVAN, CALDERON, SOLIS, MORETO, HOZ, MOLINA, ROJAS, SALAZER, AMESCUA, MENDOZA, GUEVASA, CABILLO, COELLO, GODINEZ, TRAGOSO, D'ALARCON, GUILLEN DE CASTRO &c. constantly followed.

The above poets belonged to the highest period of the Spanish Theatre, and produced nearly all the three thousand eight hundred and fifty two plays enumerated by la HUERTA.

4.—*From the 7th part of* LAS CASES "*Memorial de Sainte Hélène*," *and at page* 116.

"The emperor read the *Agamemnon* of ÆSCHYLUS, which he very much admired for its great force and simplicity. We were particularly struck with the graduation of terror which characterizes the productions of this father of tragedy.—It was observed that this was the first spark to which the light of the modern drama may be traced.—*Agamemnon* being finished—the emperor asked for the *Œdipus of Sophocles*, which also interested us exceedingly: and the emperor expressed his regret at not having had it performed at St. Cloud. TALMA had always opposed the idea ; but the emperor was sorry that he had relinquished it.—"Not (said he) that I wished to correct our drama, by antique models — heaven forbid ! But merely wished to have opportunity of judging how far ancient composition would have harmonized with modern notions."—He said he was convinced that such a performance would have afforded pleasure : and he made several remarks on

the impression that was likely to be produced on modern taste, by the Greek *Chorusses, Coryphæi*, &c. He next turned to VOLTAIRE'S *Œdipus*, on which he bestowed high commendation. This piece, he said, contained the finest scene in the French drama.

5.—SENECA'S *Medea.*

It is a curious fact, that in this piece, the chorus distinctly predicts the discovery of America, which took place 1400 years after that drama was written. In the passage here alluded to, it is said—"a new TIPHY'S, a son of the earth, will, in ages to come, discover remote regions towards the West, and Thule will no longer be the extremity of the universe."

6.—LOPE DE VEGA was born at Madrid, in 1562, fifteen years after CERVANTES and received a good education. He entered the army and was one of the "Invincible Armada." He continued even to the end of his life, to cultivate poetry, and with such an inconceivably facility, that a play of more than two thousand verses, intermixed with sonnets and octaves, and abounding in intrigues, unexpected events and interesting situations seldom cost him above a day's labour. He himself tells us, that more than one hundred of his pieces were given to the stage twenty-four hours after the first conception. In this manner, he produced more than one thousand eight hundred comedies, and four hundred *Autos Sacramentales*, of the whole of which only three hundred have ever been published. These labours produced him as much money as glory. At one time he was worth above one hundred thousand Ducats; but after living in a splendid manner, he left but little property at his death. He died in 1635, being 73 years of age. It has been calculated that in his life-time he wrote twenty-one million three hundred thousand verses, upon a hundred and thirty-three thousand two hundred and twenty-two sheets of paper.

SAM SAM'S S

Truro, 1st Sept. 1824.

HORÆ CRITICÆ.

No. VII.

CONGREVE.

"These are bards
Whose loose lascivious lays perpetuated
Their own corruption. Soul-polluted slaves,
Who sat them down, deliberately lewd,
So to awake and pamper lust.
SOUTHEY. *Visions of the Maid of Orleans.*

In brilliancy of wit and elegance of language no English writer has rivalled or approached CONGREVE; yet it is a common observation that his pieces do not draw.—A critic goes to see "*Love for Love*," and, having sat out the performance in a very thin house, returns, in ill humour, to pen an invective against managers, who can produce, and audiences who can tolerate the *namby pamby* of MOUTON, and the dullness of POCOCKE. This is not entirely without foundation, for persons, who admire the two latter writers, must be about as good judges of wit, as a coal-heaver would be of claret; but CONGREVE has one defect, which *must* render him unattractive;—his indelicacy though the prompter has scattered his commas profusely in every scene, obscenity still remains so deeply interwoven with the principal stuff, that, like the Chinese embroidery, in *Martin's* coat, it cannot be picked out without destroying the entire substance. It does not appear occasionally, and when likely to improve the plot or create effect, as in the comedies of FARQUHAR, but every character is imbued with it, and it is vented in almost every speech. The fine gentlemen make love in such a manner as to shew how little they esteem modesty in the qualifications of a wife, and the fine ladies answer them so familiarly and appear so perfectly *au fait* in the subjects of conversation as to satisfy the hearers that they are little better than what delicacy will not permit me to mention. In the present state of society no husband can take his wife, no father can take his family, nay, no man of decent feelings can accompany his mistress, to the representation of one

of CONGREVE's plays; and I confess, were I a lover, I should feel little more regret at seeing the object of my affections lounging in the saloon, than at seeing her in the lower boxes during the performance of "*Love for Love.*"

Some allowance must be made to CONGREVE on account of the age in which he wrote. The puritans, about the middle of the seventeenth century had carried *priggism* in morality to a ludicrous excess. With political liberty constantly in their mouths, they enacted laws, which interfered with the private freedom of every member of the community. Not content with shutting up those temples of Belzebub, the playhouses, they made fornication an indictable misdemeanour, and for the second offence, felony, without benefit of clergy. It is a trite observation that extremes produce extremes, and, on the restoration, the people, who had been so absurdly restrained, gave themselves up to pleasure in the most extravagant degree. The court encouraged licentiousness, by patronage and example, and many affected to be much worse than they really were. A suspicion of puritanism was dangerous to any person on whom it might fall. He who lived soberly and continently, was marked as an enemy to the state, and shrewdly suspected of being no good friend to the church. The dramatists, who had been so severely persecuted by the fanatics, and were patronised by the cavaliers, naturally became as loyal and obscene as the best of his majesty's subjects. SHADWELL, DRYDEN, and ETHERIDGE charmed the town with plays, which would not now been endured at the Surrey or Bartholomew Fair. OTWAY laid his scenes in a brothel, and carried matters so far that were "*Venice Preserved*" revived as originally acted, the more decent part of the ladies in the slips would be obliged to withdraw.

To those who babble about the virtue of our ancestors, no better answer can be given than a reference to the state of the stage, from the restoration to the death of Queen ANNE. There is scarcely a comedy of that period in which cuckoldom is not introduced as a capital practical joke, and allusions made to it as a matter of common occurrence. It may be said that the dramatists exaggerated, but it

cannot be supposed that they wholly misrepresented the manners of the age. The theatres were then much more fashionably attended than they are now. All the higher orders frequented a new play as they now do a new opera; and if they had found no verisimilitude in the picture,—if they had really disliked indecency, if they had not been generally and grossly immoral themselves,—they would have driven such pieces from the stage, with contempt and indignation.

In such an age CONGREVE became a candidate for public favour, and wrote with so much *gaiety* that the most licentious were enraptured, and with so much genuine wit that the more severe could hardly venture to condemn. Though to us he appears gross, he did not seem so then; for when compared with some of his predecessors he is almost modest. Their pieces have fallen into merited neglect; his, in spite of their great and radical defect, have maintained their places, by wit alone. His reputation disarms criticism; for who would venture to hiss CONGREVE, but the sooner his works are shelved the better, for every reproduction must be unprofitable to the proprietors, and painful to every respectabe female who may be *accidentally* present, for that any one would be so intentionally I can not believe.

In expressing myself so decidedly respecting the representation of CONGREVE's plays. I by no means wish to deprive ladies of the pleasure of reading them—I do not wish female virtue to be founded on ignorance, and dislike the "*bread and butter misses*" and "*innocent simplicity*" as much as any body; but as no woman will allow indecent conversation to be addressed to her in society, I do not think it ought to be offered on the stage.

As every one has read CONGREVE it would be waste of time to say much upon his merits. His plots excite little interest; and the stage business often moves heavily. His characters though seldom true to nature, are in correct keeping with themselves and each other. Many are merely sketches but all are distinctly and agreeably marked. Wit is given to each, not in proportion to what the character requires, but to what he has to say; for every speech is brilliant and the longest is always the most so. The minor

parts are so well done, that few companies could be found capable of doing justice to his worst comedy; but this is not to be regretted, as their beauties can be fully relished by the reader and their faults must always render them offensive to the spectator.

As a writer of tragedy CONGREVE was successful, for the "*Mourning Bride*" was very favourably received by the public; yet it would be flattery to call it a middling composition—With the exception of two or three passages, the language is common place, and only distinguished from prose by every tenth syllable beginning with a capital. The plot is improbable; the characters are extravagant; and the thoughts puerile.—Quotations would be superflous, and reference unnesssary, for every page will shew the correctness of my censure. There is however one scene which I cannot help noticing, and which I suppose is an imitation of *Hotspur's* death, who expires saying he is "*food for* ——". *Osmyn* enters with a paper, found "*in a dark corner of his cell,*" and which proves to be in his father's hand, who from some curious fancy in theology, it seems, said his prayers in writing thus:

"Let every hair which sorrow by the roots
Tears from my hoary and devoted head,
Be doubled in thy mercy to my son:
Not for myself but him; hear me all-gracious ——.
'Tis wanting what should follow. 'Heaven' should follow
But 'tis torn off," &c.

The pious son, full of gratitude to his father for wishing him so fine a head of hair, then proceeds to moralise in a long soliloquy on the strange circumstance of the word "*heaven*" being torn off, and draws prognostications from it which, if any one thinks worth reading, may be found in Act 3. Sc. 1. I do not think them worth transcribing.

CONGREVE's reputation must be supported by his comedies alone. He published a considerable quantity of verses, original and translated, which may be divided into two classes, the bad and the execrable. His pastoral on the death of Queen MARY is in the worst style of school-boy drivelling. His lighter efforts have the indecency of his plays without their wit, and, though apparently la-

boured, are incorret and unequal. Some good lines might perhaps be selected from them, but I do not remember one, and am not disposed to re-peruse compositions in which the good is like *Gratiano's* "two grains of wheat hid in two bushels of chaff, for which you may seek in vain all day, and if found, are not worth the search." Z.

ON THE PRÆTERNATURAL BEINGS OF SHAKSPEARE.

(*Continued from page* 137.)

Every species of poetry has its distinct duties and obligations. The drama does not, like the epic, admit of episode, superfluous beings, or things incredible; for, as it is observed, by a critic of ingenuity and taste, (1) "that, which passes in representation, and challenges, as it were, the scrutiny of the eye, must be truth itself, or something very nearly approaching to it." It should indeed be, what our imagination will adopt, though our reason would reject it—Great caution and dexterity, are required in the dramatic poet, to give an air of reality to fictitious existence.

In the bold attempt to give to airy nothing, a local habitation and a person, regard must be paid to fix it in such scenes, and to display it in such actions, as are agreeable to the popular opinion.—Witches holding their sabbath, and saluting passengers on the blasted heath; ghosts, at the midnight hour, visiting the glimpses of the moon, and whispering a bloody secret, from propriety of place and action, derive a credibility, very propitious to the scheme of the poet. Reddere personæ—convenientia cuique, cannot be less his duty, in regard to these superior and divine, than to human characters—Indeed, from the invariableness of their natures, a greater consistency and uniformity is necessary; but, most of all, as the belief of their interventions, depends entirely on their manners and sentiments, suiting with the preconceived opinion of them.

(1) HURD, on dramatic imitation.

The magician *Prospero*, raising a storm; witches performing infernal rites; or any other exertion of the supposed powers and qualities of the agent, were easily credited by the vulgar.

The genius of SHAKSPEARE informed him, that poetic fable must rise above the simple tale of the nurse; therefore he adorns the beldame tradition, with flowers gathered on classic ground, but still wisely suffering those simples of her native soil, to which the established superstitions of her country has attributed a magic spell, to be predominant. Can any thing be more poetical, than *Prospero's* address to his attendant sprites, before he dismisses them?

"Ye elves of hills, brooks, standing lakes, and groves, &c."

Here are agreeably summed up the popular stories, concerning the power of magicians. The incantations of the witches in "*Macbeth*" are more solemn and terrible than those of the "*Erichtho*" of LUCAN, or of the "*Canidia*" of HORACE—It may be said, indeed, that SHAKSPEARE had an advantage, derived from the more direful character of his national superstitions.

A celebrated writer in his ingenious letters on chivalry, has observed, that the Gothic manners, and Gothic superstitions, are more adapted to the uses of poetry, than the Grecian. The devotion of those times, was gloomy and fearful, not being purged of the terrors of the Celtic fables. The priest often availed himself of the dire inventions of his predecessor, the Druid. The church of Rome, adopted many of the Celtic superstitions; others, which were not established by it as points of faith, still maintained a traditional authority among the vulgar. Climate, temper, modes of life, and institutions of government, seem all to have conspired, to make the superstitions of the Celtic nations, melancholy and terrible. Philosophy had not mitigated the austerity of ignorant devotion, or tamed the fierce spirit of enthusiasm. As the bards, who were our philosophers and poets, pretended to be possessed of the dark secrets of magic and divination, they certainly encouraged the ignorant credulity, and anxious fears, to which such impostures owe their success and credit. The retired and gloomy scenes, appointed for the most solemn rites of devotion; the auste-

rity and rigour of druidical discipline and jurisdiction; the fasts, the penances, the sad excommunications from the comforts and privileges of civil life; the dreadful anathema, whose vengeance pursued the wretched beyond the grave, which bounds all human power and mortal jurisdiction, must deeply imprint on the mind, all those forms of superstition, such an hierarchy presented. The bard, who was subservient to the druid, had mixed them in his heroic song; in his historical annals; in his medical practice: genii assisted his heroes; dæmons decided the fate of the battle; and charms cured the sick, or the wounded. After the consecrated groves were cut down, and the temples demolished, the tales that sprung from thence, were still preserved with religious reverence in the minds of the people.

The poet found himself happily situated amidst enchantments, ghosts, goblins: every element supposed the residence of a kind of deity; the genius of the mountain, the spirit of the floods, the oak endued with sacred prophecy, made men walk abroad with a fearful apprehension

Of powers unseen, and mightier far than they.

On the mountains, and in the woods, stalked the angry spectre: and in the gayest and most pleasing scenes, even within the cheerful haunts of men, amongst villages and farms,

Tripp'd the light fairies and the dapper elves.

The reader will easily perceive what resources remained for the poet in this visionary land of ideal forms. The general scenery of nature, considered as inanimate, only adorns the descriptive part of poetry; but, being, according to the Celtic traditions, animated by a kind of intelligences, the bard could better make use of them for his moral purposes. That awe of the immediate presence of the deity, which, amongst the rest of the vulgar, is confined to temples and altars, was here diffused over every object. They passed trembling through the woods, and over the mountains, and by the lakes, inhabited by these invisible powers; such apprehensions must indeed

Deepen the murmur of the falling floods,
And shed a browner horror on the woods;

give fearful accents to every whisper of the animate—or inanimate creation, and arm every shadow with terrors.

With great reason, therefore, it was asserted, that the western bards had advantage over HOMER, in the superstitions of their country.—The religious ceremonies of Greece, were more pompous than solemn; and seemed as much a part of their civic institutions, as belonging to spiritual matters: nor did they impress so deep a sense of invisible beings, and prepare the mind to catch the enthusiasm of the poet, and to receive with veneration, the phantoms he presented.

Our countryman has another superiority over the Greek poets, even the earliest of them, who, having imbibed the learning of mysterious Greece, addicted themselves to allegory; but our Gothic bard, employs the potent agency of sacred fable, instead of mere amusive allegory. When the world becomes learned and philosophical, fable refines into allegory—but the age of fable, is the golden age of poetry: when the beams of unclouded reason, and the steady lamp of inquisitive philosophy, throw their penetrating rays upon the phantoms of imagination, they discover them to have been mere shadows, formed by ignorance. The thunderbolts of JOVE, forged in Cimmerian caves; the cestus of VENUS, woven by hands of the attracting graces, cease to terrify and allure. Echo, from an amorous nymph, fades into voice, and nothing more; the very threads of IRIS's scarf are untwisted; all the poet's spells are broken, his charms dissolved: deserted on his own enchanted ground, he takes refuge in the groves of philosophy; but there his divinities evaporate in allegory, in which mystic and insubstantial state, they do but weakly assist his operations. By associating his nurse with philosophy, he hopes she may establish with the learned, the worship she won from the ignorant; so makes her quit the old traditional fable, from whence she derived her first authority and power, to follow airy hypothesis, and chimerical systems. Allegory, the daughter of fable, is admired by the fastidious wit and abstruse scholar, when her mother begins to be treated as superannuated, foolish, and doting; but however well she may please and amuse, not being worshipped as divine, she does not awe and terrify, like sacred mythology, nor ever can establish the

same fearful devotion, nor assume such arbitrary power over the mind—her person is not adapted to the stage, nor her qualities to the business and end of dramatic representation. L'ABBE DU BOS has judiciously distinguished the reasons, why allegory is not fit for the drama. What the critic investigated by art and study, the wisdom of nature unfolded to our unlettered poet, or he would not have resisted the prevalent fashion of his allegorizing age; especially as SPENCER's fairy queen, was the admired work of the times.

Allegorical beings, performing acts of chivalry, fell in with the taste of an age, that affected obstruse learning, romantic valour, and high-flown gallantry. Prince ARTHUR, the British Hercules, was brought from ancient ballads and romances, to be allegorized into the knight of magnanimity, at the court of Gloriana. His knights followed him thither, in the same moralized garb, and even the questynge beast, received no less honour and improvement from the allegorizing art of SPENCER, as has been shewn by a critic of great learning, ingenuity, and taste, in his observations on the *Fairy Queen*.

Our first theatrical entertainments, after we emerged from gross barbarism, were of the allegorical kind—the Christmas carol, and carnival shews, the pious pastimes of our holy-days, were turned into pageantries, and masques, all symbolical and allegorical.—Our stage rose from hymns to the virgin, and encomiums on the patriarchs and saints; as the Grecian tragedies from the hymns to Bacchus. Our early poets, added narration and action to this kind of psalmody; as ÆSCHYLUS had done to the song of the goat. Much more rapid indeed, was the progress of the Grecian stage towards perfection.—Philosophy, poetry, eloquence, all the fine arts, were in their meridian glory, when the drama first began to dawn at Athens, and gloriously it shone forth, illumined by every kind of intellectual light.

(To be continued.)

GARRICK AND Mrs. SIDDONS.

The following particulars are published of the first introduction of the above distinguished actress to the London stage.

The late Earl of AYLESBURY having seen Mrs. SIDDONS perform at Cheltenham in the summer of 1773, forty-eight years ago, spoke to GARRICK in such admiration of her theatrical talents, as to excite his earnest attention; who, therefore, without loss of time, wrote to his friend, Mr. BATE (now Sir HENRY BATE DUDLEY), as follows:—

"*Hampton, July* 31*st*, 1775.

Dear BATE,—If you pass by Cheltenham in your way to Worcester, I wish you would see an actress there, a Mrs. SIDDONS; she has a desire, I hear, to try her fortune with us; if she seems in your eyes, worthy of being transplanted, pray desire to know upon what conditions she would make the trial, and I will write to her the post after I receive your letter. Pay our compliments to your lady, and accept of our warmest wishes for an agreeable journey and safe return to London.

"Yours, my dear Sir, most sincerely,
(Signed) "D. GARRICK.

"Addressed to the Rev. Mr. BATE."

An immediate reply so fully confirmed the opinion of Lord AYLESBURY, that a negociation was entered into, and an engagement agreed upon between Mr. BATE and Mr. SIDDONS for the term of three years, at a weekly stipend of six pounds to Mrs. SIDDONS, and an inferior one for Mr. SIDDONS, during the Drury-lane season, which appears to have been duly ratified from the subjoined letter:—

Hampton, August 15, 1755.

"Dear BATE—Ten thousand thanks for your very clear, agreeable, and friendly letter; it pleased me much, and whoever calls it *a jargon of unintelligible stuff*, should be knocked down if I were near him. I must desire you to secure the lady with my best compliments, and that she may depend upon every reasonable and friendly encouragement in my power; at y' same time, you must intimate to y' husband, that he must be satisfy'd with *the state of life*

in which it has pleased Heaven to call her. You see how much I think myself obliged to your kind offices, by the flattering quotations I make from your *own book.* Y' account of the *big belly* alarms me! when shall we be in shapes again? How long does the lady count? when will she be able to appear? Pray complete your good offices, and let me know all we are to trust to. Should not you get some memorandum signed by her and her husband, and of which I will send a fac-simile copy to them, under a frank, if you will let me know their address.

"I laughed at the military stratagems of the Covent-Garden Generals, whilst I had your genius to oppose them. If she has merit (as I am sure by your letter she must have) and will be wholly governed by me, I will make her theatrical fortune; if any lady begins to play us tricks, I will immediately play off my masked battery of SIDDONS against her. I should be glad to know her cast of parts, or rather what parts she has done, and in what she likes herself *best* —those I would have mark'd, and, above all, my dear Farmer, let me know about what time she may reckon to lye-in, that we may reckon accordingly upon her appearance in Drury-lane. I repeat this to you, because it is of the utmost consequence.

"Pray let me hear from you again in answer to this. I make no compliments or excuses to you for the trouble I give you, because I feel by myself that you take pleasure in obliging me.

"I am, my dear Farmer, most sincerely yours,

(Signed) "D. GARRICK.

"Mrs. GARRICK joins with me in every good wish for you and your lady.

"Rev. Mr. BATE, Hop-pole Worcester."

From the statement now given, the early display is manifested of that genius that progressively raised this celebrated actress to unrivalled pre-eminence; for though, from whatever cause, at the close of her first engagement, she retired to the theatre at Bath, it was but for a short season, to re-appear in the capital in cloudless splendor. Lord ERSKINE, and a few literary friends at the bar, had the merit of principally promoting her subsequent return to the London stage.

THE DRAMATIC SKETCHER.

No. XIV.

THE FAREWELL.

Ludovico, a young man of humble origin, forms an attachment to *Laura*, the heiress of a Florentine earldom. *Vancenza*, her father, instigated by a mercenary spirit, compels her, on pain of his everlasting curse, to forswear her lover, and accept the splendid offers of alliance that have been made by a Bohemian nobleman. The poor girl, terrified by his menaces, is lured into compliance, and promises implicit obedience if he will permit her to have one parting interview with *Ludovico*; which accordingly takes place by moonlight, on the eve of the day on which he quits Florence for ever. The story is told in a recent publication on Italy.

SCENE.—*A Lawn near the Palace of Vancenza.*

Moonlight.—LAURA *and* LUDOVICO.

LUD. Dear girl! your father, then, has told you all.

LAU E'en so; but tho' we part, once more, my love!
Let us exchange forgiveness. I have been
A very trouble to you, *Ludovico*,
But it is over now,—henceforth we are free;
You will go far away, and I shall wander
By the sweet scenes, where once we breath'd the tale
Of mutual constancy. The stream will flow
Murmuringly on; the wind of heaven will kiss
The wild flow'rs still; but the sweet voice that spoke
Of nature in her beauty, the blue eye
That dwells with me so fondly on her charms,
Will be there never more.

LUD. Poor girl! there is a fate that lures us on
Irresistibly to ruin. I had thought
A happier time would come, when we should be
Link'd lovingly together; but we may not.
Your father, love!—

LAU. Oh! speak not of my father;

He has been harsh, and barter'd his poor child
To splendid mockery; he has bow'd down
Her spirit to the grave, and rent away
The beautiful hopes on which her fancy fed;
But still he is her father.

LUD. Father? The wretch, who with a sordid spirit
Sold thee to bridal splendor, blighted all
The blossoms of thy spring, poor virgin flow'ret;
Is he a father? Name him not.

LAU. Well, well,
He will be fatherless soon; the spring will pass,
And with it LAURA's happiness, and the next
Revolving year will smile upon her tomb.
You'll write to me sometimes?

LUD. As you list,
My gentle girl; if tears and mild reproaches,
The violent gushings of a broken heart,
Can soothe me, thou shalt hear from me,—but, hark!
The night wind sounds. Oh! dearest, dearest love;
E'en sounds will scare me now,—list! how it moans
Mournfully amid the forest trees,—dost hear?
It is a funeral dirge, hymn'd by the nymphs
For their sweet votary.

LAU. I pry'thee cease,—
My heart is full to bursting; it is cruel
To sear me thus; have I deserved it of thee?

LUD. Forgive me, love! I shall not long offend you—
I shall be gone by day-break, never more
To *curse* your sight! But, oh! I dare not think
Of parting; lone and melancholy thoughts
Intrude themselves upon me, 'till I become
Weak as a child. Farewell, my pretty one!
Thou'st fled the arms of one who would have lov'd,
Cheered thee thro' life, to wed with a proud lord
And wanton in his wealth; but I forgive thee
E'en from my heart.

LAU. Oh! LUDOVICO, when—when I am gone,
You'll think of me, and all th' unkindly words
That pierce my soul, will then come thronging back
Upon your mind: nay, do not weep, my love!
I speak not thus in wantonness; I am going

A long, long journey, and the last farewell
I take of thee, must ne'er be sullied by
Ill-favored bitterness. You remember well
The hour when first we met; the moonlight shone
Upon thy pale and melancholy cheek,
And the bright stars did reel them to and fro
As if in very mockery they beam'd
Upon our meeting;—'twas an hour, my friend,
Never to be forgotten. Moons may change
And fade along the sky; the summer sun
May sink in gloom; the flowrets bloom and wither
Unnotic'd on the stem; but that sweet hour
When first we met can never be forgotten.

LUD. Cease! fond one, cease!
Past times come rushing on my dewy eye,
And I but play the woman.

LAU. But one word more
And I have done. When in some far-off clime,
Some realm of sunny Italy, you rove
With other maids, constant and true as I am;
When music breathes of love, and the full heart
Echoes of fondness, do not quite forget
The maid you've left behind you. Oh! I fear
Thy faith, my LUDOVICO! yet, why claim
Thy constancy? for ever, ever lost,
As I am now to thee! Farewell, Farewell!
Oh! I could cling for ever thus!—but, hark!
My father's voice,—away! fond heart, away!

LUD. One kiss—one parting kiss, and now farewell!
[*Exit* LUDOVICO.

LAU. He's gone, and I have nought on earth to love;
Not e'en the forest echo that once told
The secret of our bliss; for it is silent,
And speaks no more of joy. Oh! father, father,
You have been cruel to your child, and dug
With your own hand her narrow grave!
She will go down in all the bloom of youth
To the dark silent mansion of the dead,
And worms will revel on her clay-cold features
That men swore were so beautiful; but, hark!
The wind-god is abroad, and lightly wakes

The woodland music. Ere the yellow leaf,
Tost by the gale, drops on the wind-bared earth,
I shall lie cold beneath it, and the breeze
Will hymn poor LAURA's death dirge.
Thou sweet moon!
That roll'st thro' heaven's blue vault, unchang'd as is
My virgin love, I call on thee to light
My fancy to its grave! for I would die
Beneath thy smile, that first shone brightly on
The fair face of my wooer:
Ah! 'tis in vain; yon darkling cloud sails by
To mar thy beauty. Gentle DIAN,
Thou turn'st from my request; well, be it so,
The wretched never know a friend until
Their hour of need is past:—now to my father.

DRAMATIC REVIEW.

ARTICLE I.

Dramatic Costume of Shakspeare's Historical Tragedy of King John, selected and arranged from the Best Authorities, expressly for the Proprietors of the Theatre Royal Covent Garden; with Biographical, Critical and Explanatory Notices, by J. R. PLANCHE. *The figures designed and executed on Stone, by* J. K. MEADOWS.

Dramatic Costume of Shakspeare's Historical Tragedy of King Henry the Fourth, Part 1st &c.

We are indebted to the pen of Mr. PLANCHE for several clever Dramas, but we think he has better served the stage, and more advanced his own reputation by the publication now before us, the object and utility of which will be fully appreciated from the following introductory remarks of its Editor.

"It has long been a subject of regret to the lovers and patrons of the theatre, that the greater number of the plays

of SHAKSPEARE, the grandest dramatic productions which this or any other nation can boast, should be decidedly the worst dressed and most incorrectly decorated of any productions, ancient or modern, exhibited on our metropolitan stages. It is true, that the late Mr. KEMBLE, (whose classical mind revolted from the barbarisms which even a GARRICK had tolerated) abolished the bag wig of *Brutus*, and the gold laced waistcoat of *Macbeth*, and combated the prejudices by which he was surrounded, with the taste, talent, and intrepidity which distinguished the whole of his brilliant career; but, from what causes we will not pretend to determine, the alterations made in the costume of plays, founded on English history, in particular, while they rendered them more picturesque, added but little to their propriety, the whole series, *King Lear* included, being dressed in the habits of the Elizabethan age, the third reign after its termination.

"The object of the present publication is to render the dresses and decorations of SHAKSPEARE's plays, if possible, worthy of them, and the specimen laid before the proprietors of Covent Garden Theatre having received their unqualified approbation, and fixed the determination of Mr. CHARLES KEMBLE to commence the reformation he had long been anxious to introduce in dramatic costume, the first number is in consequence now presented to the public.

"As the difficulty of the Editor's task has been considerably heightened by the numerous errors existing in nearly every work yet published on the subject, its utility will, he trusts, be increased in a corresponding degree. To the historal painter, this publication is earnestly recommended, as not only presenting in itself the precise costume of the period; but containing such references to indisputable authorities, that the artist may easily and immediately turn to them for complete confirmation or additional instruction."

The figures are neatly executed; as a specimen of the descriptions, with which they are accompanied, we take the following;

KING HENRY IV.—FIRST DRESS.

His effigy, in the Chapel of St. Thomas a Becket, Canterbury Catherdal.

"This character has been generally dressed from the picture in Kensington Palace, and, as far as fashion goes, there is little to complain of; but it is shrewdly suspected, was not painted till the reign of HENRY VIIth, and consequently, that is no authority whatever: I am the more inclined to believe this, from the fact, that though the costume is certainly similar in some respects, to the dress of HENRY IVth's time, it is perfectly unlike that in which he is represented in the screen of York Cathedral; in the '*Regimine Principis*' of OCCLEVE; (Bod. Lib. Digley, 283), or in any other effigy, or painting of him, which I have met with. It may, however, still be worn by the actor with propriety, for the reason above stated; but, as my object is to present the public with copies of the most authentic specimens, I have chosen the effigy in Canterbury Cathedral, for the subject of the first plate of this number.

"HENRY IV,' says CAMDEN, "was the last of our kings that did bear some of flowers de liz's, quartered with his lions of England, as you may note on his seal; and, for his device, used a fox's tail, dependent, following LYSANDER's advice—if the lion's skin was too short, to piece it out with a fox's case!' *Remains p.* 219. SANDFORD gives him for his supporters, a swan and an antelope.—Vide Genealogical History. The former he had from the DE BOHUNS; and it was borne as a badge, by his son HENRY, while Prince of Wales.—*Vide Archæologia, vol. 20, notes.*

KING HENRY IV.—SECOND DRESS.

The seal of this monarch is supposed, with much probability, by SANDFORD, to be that of RICHARD II., with merely a new legend. I have, therefore, represented the king in a suit of gilt armour, (for the formation of which

I am indebted to the monumental brasses of SIR GEORGE FELBRIDGE, and SIR NICHOLAS DAGWORTH, 1400—1, the best specimen of the military costume of this period), with the jupon, girdle, &c., the former embroidered with the royal arms, and his bascinet embroidered with a crown, as are those of his predecessors, in the French Metrical History, Harleian Lib. 1319, and the royal personages figured in the *Chronique de St. Dennis*,—Sloane Lib. 2433, written at the commencement of the fifteenth century.(1) In the back ground is a knight holding the royal banner, and displaying on his shield and jupon the arms of SIR WALTER BLUNT, the kings Standard-bearer; viz barry nebulee of six pieces, or and sable." *Vide Lyson's Magna Brit. Derby.*

We cannot at present spare room for any further extracts but we shall endeavour to return at an early period to this very valuable publication.

B.

ARTICLE II.

A Letter to a Member of Parliament, on the Impropriety of classing Players with Rogues and Vagabonds, by A. BARRISTER.

This is a pamphlet of considerable ingenuity—the object of the writer being to show that the first act which treated the unlicensed player as a vagrant, contemplated a very different description of artists from our leading performers of the present day, and also to remove a slur (if any such exists) which the fact of performers being liable, under

(1) STRUTT observes, a crown or some distinguishable mark, was always worn by the kings in battle; so that when MAUDLIN was set up to counterfeit king RICHARD II, he had a crown upon his helmet, that the people might be deceived and to take him for the king." *Antiquities vol. 2.*

any circumstances, to be classed as vagrants, has enabled the enemies of the stage to cast upon acting in general. The original statute to which the gentlemen of the sock owe this least enviable of their various characters appears to be the 39th Eliz.—An Act which was passed at the time when nothing even approaching to the character of scenic performance was known throughout England, except in London; and which was intended (as the author of the pamphlet observes) to suppress the "common players of interludes," a sort of disorderly persons who went in parties of two or three together, probably mumming about the country at wakes, and in the alehouses, and who were no more entitled to be considered as "actors of the drama" than our "clown to the ring" of the present day, or the man who whips the horses round one at Astley's or Bartholomew fair.

Indeed, the licence granted by JAMES 1st to BURBAGE, SHAKSPEARE and FLETCHER sufficiently shows the estimation in which "regular actors" (taking the reasonable acceptation of the word "regular") were held in that King's days; which it is not at all unprobable that BURBAGE and SHAKSPEARE whose influence at court is known to have been considerable, might have been well inclined to favour an act like that of Q. ELIZABETH which gave them a profitable monopoly of their calling. The licence of JAMES (as quoted in the pamphlet before us) runs thus:—

"Pro LAURENTIO FLETCHER, et WILLIELMO SHAKSPEARE, et aliis. A. D. 1603. Pat.

"1. Jac. P. 2. m. 4.—JAMES, by the grace of God, &c. to all justices, &c. truly. Know you that we have licensed and authorized these our servants, LAWRENCE FLETCHER, WILLIAM SHAKSPEARE, RICHARD BURBAGE, AUGUSTINE PHILLIPPES, JOHN HEMINGS, HENRY CONDEL, &c. and the rest of their associates, freely to use and exercise the art and faculty of playing comedies, tragedies, histories, interludes, morals, pastorals, stage plays, and such like other, as they have already studied, or hereafter shall use or stu-

dy, as well for the recreation of our loving subjects, as for our solace and pleasure, when we shall think good to see them, during our pleasure; and the said comedies, tragedies, histories, interludes, morals, pastorals, stage plays, and such like, to show and exercise publicly their best commodity, when the infection of the plague shall decrease, as well within their now usual house called the Globe, within our county of Surrey; as also within any town-halls, or moute-halls, or other convenient places within the liberties and freedom of any other city, university, town, or borough whatsoever, within our said realms and dominions. Willing and commanding you, and every of you, as you tender our pleasure, not only to permit and suffer them herein, without any your lets, hindrances, or molestations, during our pleasure, but also to be aiding or assisting to them, if any wrong be to them offered, and to allow them such former curtesies as hath been given to men of their place and quality; and also what further favour you shall show to these our servants for our sakes, we shall take kindly at your hands.

"Witness ourself, at Westminster, the 19th day of May.

"Per Breve de privato Sigillo."

The law touching the vagrancy of actors, however, as it now stands—upon the acts of the 10th G. II. and 28th G. III.—is something misunderstood, or misrepresented abroad. A player is not a vagrant, any more than a member of any other profession, until he is found doing that which the law declares to be an act of vagrancy. In fact, the existing law applies equally to all the world—not to persons merely, who pursue the stage as a trade or business. It says, that *any man* who shall be found performing a play, for gain or hire, without some one of the licences or authorities stipulated by law, to be first obtained, shall be dealt with as a vagrant, if he have no settlement in the place where he offends, and fined £50 (this fine is the whole penalty) if he has a settlement in the place. Now the effect of this obviously is, that he stands exactly in the same situation with a vast number of respectable persons, who follow trades or professions, which the law says shall only be carried on by licence. It might be as well, perhaps, if, instead of being turned over to the vagrant act, under any circum-

stances, the performer of a play for hire without due authority, were made liable (in all cases) to a specific penalty—tho' the necessity of preventing chimney-sweepers from playing *Othello*, is a question, we apprehend, rather of taste than of legislation—but, practically, as the law stands, actors have no grievance to complain of; nor is there one word to be found in the statute-book which really detracts from the respectability of their pursuit.

G.

THEATRICAL EPIGRAMS, &c.

IMPROMPTU.

Written in the lobby of the Swansea Theatre, on seeing Miss S. BOOTH *perform Rosalind, in "As you Like it."*

Mirth, Wit, and Satire—hand in hand,
Inspir'd our SHAKSPEAR's matchless mind,
When from the master-wizard's wand
Came forth the joyous "*Rosalind.*"

And Nature, in her merriest mood,
Just what the glowing Poet meant her,
Of all the best of flesh and blood
Made sweet "S. BOOTH" to represent her.

Printed by T. and J. Elvey, Castle Street, Holborn.

THE DRAMA.

SUPPLEMENT TO VOL. VI.

MR. MUNDEN.

(Concluded from Vol. v. page 321.)

Mr. MUNDEN, was born in Brooks Market, Holborn, in the year 1758. His father, who followed the trade of a poulterer, paid the debt of nature when our adventurer was in his infancy, who remained under his mother's roof and protection until he had attained his twelfth year, when as a trial of the bent of his inclinations, he was placed with an apothecary.

A month's acquaintance with the contents of phials and gallipots proved quite sufficient. Having had enough of *physic*, law next engaged his attention. Some very fine specimens of penmanship procured him a ready admission into the office of an attorney, in New Inn. His abilities, so happily suited for the desk, for a time induced his friends to imagine that he could not do better than to continue in a line for which he appeared so well qualified, and he was on the eve of being articled to a gentleman in Staple's Inn, when, considering that without a very good fortune, such a measure would most probably militate against his future prospects, the idea was given up, and he was apprenticed to a writing stationer in Chancery Lane, but his master dying within two years, he was turned over to another in the same line.

His present employer entertained a partiality for the *old school;* had a very great objection to a *powdered head:* and saw no occasion for his apprentice to appear as a fine gentleman, while employed in the duties of his *station.* Young MUNDEN being of a different opinion, some quarrels ensued; he turned a deaf ear to the sober councils of his master, and in defiance of his commands, would appear, at all times, *smart and genteel.* Disgusted with his situation, he resolved to quit it before the expiration of his time. An attorney in the Borough accepted his proffered services; and he remained a twelvemonth longer engaged in a calling, by no means suited to the turn of his mind, which had long pondered on matters of different import. Often while engrossing a skin of parchment, has our hero meditated a visit to that idol of many a stage-struck wight the matchless GARRICK. Often has he fancied his pen a glittering dagger, his ink the purple stream, his rule a truncheon, and his parchment a drum head.

From an early period we may date our hero's unsettled state of mind. His infant thoughts had made their election, nor was it in his power to combat with the strong propensity. An acquaintance with a gentleman at the Haymarket Theatre, gave him a chance of an introduction to the stage. His acquaintance being engaged to perform at Liverpool for the summer, our adventurer followed him in about a week after his departure.

At Liverpool he would have done any thing to gain a footing: an employ behind the scenes, were it only to support the train of some mournful heroine, would have been some comfort. At length, he succeeded so far as to have the parts given him to write out. This was something for hope to feed upon; this gave money to his purse, and satisfaction to his mind. And now he came into the receipt of *eighteen-pence* per night, for which he personified by turns, but all in *hateful silence,* the beggar, and the king; the Jew and the Turk; the ghost and the devil; the priest and the man of war; taking his stand as occasion required among his dumb and humble kindred.

The company left the place when the season closed, and repaired to the London stage, where, alas, our hapless wight could not follow them. He now procured a situation

in the office of the town-clerk, where he made himself useful. He had not been long in his employ, before a play was to be performed for the benefit of a decaying tradesman. A number of young men in the town, no less fond than our hero of exhibiting their talents this way, formed the characters. The play was SHAKSPEARE'S *Henry IV*, in which, for the first time, he opened his lips as one of the carriers, and as *Bardolph*, and acquitted himself to the satisfaction of the audience, though not *entirely* to his own. To his young and ambitious mind, the gallant *Hotspur* was of more consequence. However, he yet exclaimed with *Richard*,

"Now am I fairly seated on my throne."

Young MUNDEN now meditated a visit to some relations at Rochdale, in Lancashire, where, as fate would have it, he fell in with a strolling company, whose nights were employed in *murdering kings and heroes*, and whose days, when fortune favoured, in doing the same kind office to *barn-door* fowls, to the flesh of which, these wandering wights are said to have a great partiality. Among this respectable set, our adventurer was considered as a great acquisition.

After a short stay, MUNDEN returned to Liverpool, where he remained two years in the town-clerk's office. Still uneasy under any but *stage* restraint, the days passed heavily away, and he determined on quitting his master, in the hope of meeting with an opportunity of finally fixing in that profession for which he thought nature had designed him.

With a brilliant guinea, and no more, he set off for Chester, where he remained until he was brought to his *last* shilling. With this solitary hope, he entered that theatre as a spectator, of which he afterwards became manager.

No employment could be obtained at the theatre, that darling of his hopes and wishes, and hunger, which is not easily quelled, and which never was known to be reasoned down, even among our greatest philosophers, now presented itself like a prime minister, but not like a prime minister so quickly attended to: *his* request is sometimes too

soon admitted, his desires, are often too easily gratified. But here, sad to tell, hunger put in its claim, but found that claim denied.

This obliged him to have recourse to his pen, and to seek employ from a person who had just commenced writing stationer at Chester. Attracted by an advertisement of the stationer's, he waited upon him with a specimen of his abilities, but unfortunately he did not succeed; while in application at the office, he met with a former London acquaintance, who with a generosity rarely met with, removed his temporary difficulties. What was to be done now employed his mind; the result was a determination to endeavour to reach the metropolis. The before-mentioned person not having a sufficient supply of cash in his pocket for poor MUNDEN's present purposes, pledged his ring to obtain the necessary supply, and furnished with a letter of recommendation from the stationer to a gentleman at Whitchurch, Mr. MUNDEN and his kind acquaintance, procured a Rosinante, the produce of the ring not permitting them to ride single, and thus mounted, they quitted Chester.

Arrived at Whitchurch, an interview took place between him and the gentleman to whom he was recommended, the amount of a bottle of wine was now a present not to be despised, and with this help, he proceeded on his journey. Nothing material marked his progress except a donation of a shilling from a generous attorney, to whom he applied for employ.

After being again indebted for the means of existence to friendship, in the person of a barber at Birmingham, and obtaining a supper and a bed at Stratford, by joining a party of recruits and pretending to enlist, MUNDEN arrived once more in the metropolis, where he obtained for some time a scanty subsistence by the exercise of his quill. His ruling passion, however, was insurmountable; he entered his name upon the lists of a strolling company, and made his first appearance on any stage in the character of *Old Mirable*. The theatre was *got up* by pledging the watch of the deputy manager, and MUNDEN's share of the receipts was SIX SHILLINGS and two small pieces of candle!

The barn in which they performed being burnt down

previous to the night of his benefit, he returned to London, and on the same evening repaired to the register office for engaging actors, known by the name of the *Black Lion*, Russel Court, Covent Garden. MUNDEN along with many of his burnt out brothers, were engaged to perform at Wallingford, in Berkshire. After many other vagrant engagements, he again returned to London, and occasionally performed in private plays at the Haymarket theatre. At one of these representations, HURST, the Canterbury manager saw his promise, and engaged him for the season. From Canterbury he removed to Brighton, and from that place to Chester. Soon afterwards, he took an economical trip to Whitehaven by sea, and afterwards played at Lancaster, Manchester and Newcastle upon Tyne. His talents and assiduity met with their appropriate reward; he always combined the most prudent habits, with the most convivial temper; and by frugality and industry was shortly enabled to commence manager for himself.

When Mr. AUSTIN retired, he purchased, in conjunction with Mr. WHITLOCK, the whole of the company's concerns in the theatres of Newcastle, Lancaster, Preston, Warrington and Chester.

About this time Messrs. WHITLOCK and MUNDEN made application for, and obtained, the Sheffield theatre, in addition to those already mentioned. Thus favoured by the smiles of fortune, MUNDEN might well exclaim, "what a change from yesterday!"

Now, like other great men, he experienced anxieties, from which who are exempt? The situation of a manager, however pleasant it may appear, is still crossed with numberless vexations. The different taste of audiences; the varied temper of actors, too ready to quarrel with parts allotted to them; the uncertain tenure of the different theatres, some of which were in the hands of gentlemen in the respective places in which they were situated; soon altered Mr. MUNDEN's opinion of management, and determined him to embrace the first opportunity of disposing of that property, which he had so lately purchased, under the fond idea of adding to his happiness. He soon accomplished his wishes, and left himself free to choose any eligible change that might present itself.

A winter theatre in London was what his wishes had long aimed at; but the moment did not arrive, until death removed from the stage, where he will be long remembered, the inimitable, the ill-fated EDWIN.

In the winter of 1790, Mr. MUNDEN made his first appearance, in *Sir Francis Gripe* and *Jemmy Jumps*, at the Theatre Royal Covent Garden, in which he was honoured by general applause.

When the late unfortunate WILSON retired from Covent Garden, Mr. MUNDEN succeeded to all his characters, and afterwards made his selection of the best parts of QUICK, whose state of health prevented his acceptance of a regular engagement.

While a member of Covent Garden he performed for two seasons at the Haymarket Theatre, but chiefly employed the summer at provincial theatres. He also played on the Dublin stage with considerable applause.

At the close of his engagement, Mr. HARRIS refused to raise his salary, and Mr. MUNDEN quitted the theatre, where his loss has ever since been severely felt. He came before the London audience again at the Haymarket; but a severe fit of the gout prevented his playing often. In 1813, he was engaged by the Sub-committee of Drury Lane, where he remained up to the period of his retirement, an account of which will be found at p. 181.

REMARKS ON THE CHARACTERS OF SHAKSPEARE'S RICHARD III.

RICHARD.—The real fact, whether this Monarch was the murderer of his nephews or guilty of several of the other enormities, historians charge him with, and which SHAKSPEARE, following the common feeling of his age, has certainly not endeavoured to extenuate, still waits, notwithstanding what has been written concerning it, the illustration of further evidence.

BUCK an historian of the time of JAMES I, (whose ancestor, Sir JOHN BUCK, fought at Bosworth Field and afterwards lost his head for it at Leicester) appears to have

been the first who professedly undertook to apologise for *Richard's* character; and where he could not exculpate him, has taken uncommon pains to extenuate his guilt.

Lord OXFORD, in his "*Historic Doubts*" on that reign, has trod the same ground, endeavouring to strengthen BUCK's arguments, and insinuating that many of the crimes imputed to that prince, are to be charged rather to the malevolence and rancour of the Lancastrian party, than to the demerit of his own conduct. The public, possessed of every argument that has been hitherto produced for or against that king's character, will judge impartially on the credit of the historians on one hand, and to the weight of the objections on the other.

To confine our observations to one of those facts, and the grand one by which our Bard endeavours to interest the feelings of his readers and auditors—the supposed murder of EDWARD V, and of his brother the duke of York. The secresy of this murder, to which only the few perpetrators and accomplices were privy, must have left the public under great uncertainty as to the manner, though they had no doubt of the reality of the fact.

ARNOLD, who lived in 1519, in his "*Customs of London*," under the year 1483, has the following passage expressed in very descriptive terms, the manner of the young Princes' death:—"This year decessyd the Kynge in Aprell, entring into the 23d yere of his reigne; *and the two sons of Kynge* EDWARD *were put to silence*, and the DUKE of GLOUCESTER took upon him the crowne in July," &c.

The author of "*Historic Doubts*" supposes, that *Richard* had no such evil intention of his nephews, on his accession to the crown, and that, instead of putting them to death, he meant to do honour to the eldest, by assigning him a respectable place, and robes of dignity, at the ceremony of his coronation, so remarkable for its splendour and magnificence. This fact (which has been endeavoured to be invalidated) is inferred from the wardrobe account of that King, containing the deliveries for his coronation, wherein many royal robes are said to have been delivered for *the Lord Edward, sonne of King Edward IV*, and which that ingenious author supposes would not have

been issued for any other purpose than his appearance at that solemnity. A few extracts from it, without connection with the argument in question, will amuse as matter of historic illustration.

In some of the articles of this account we may observe the fondness which *Richard* had for the *Boar*, his crest. One of them contains a charge "*for 8000 bores made and wrought upon fustain at 20s. per thousand.*"—Another article shows what dispatch was required in these preparations:

"Geven unto divers skynners, by way of reward for theyre good and hasty expedition of theyre work, 11*l.* 8*d.*" This account specifies likewise, reparations done to the wardrobe, stuff remaining after the burying of EDWARD IV, and several other particulars. The kings riding dress must have been superb. It consisted of a doublet, "made of two yards and a quarter and a half of blue cloth of gold, wrought with netts and pyne-apples, with a stomacher of the same, lined with oon ell of Holland cloth, and oon ell of busk, instede of grene clothe of gold, and a louge gown for to ride in, made of eight yards of purpul velvet, furred with eight tymbras and a half and 13 bakks of ermyn, and four tymbres, 17 wombes of ermyns, powdered with 3,300 of powdering made of bogy shanks, and a payre of short spurs all gilt."

The garments for Lord EDWARD are specified to be, a riding gown of blue velvet, lined with blue satin; a doublet and stomacher of blue satin; and for the morning after his uncles coronation, a long, and a short gown of crimson cloth of gold, one lined with green damask the other with black velvet, besides various other rich gowns, and two doublets, one of black satin, the other of green satin.

That these robes, this magnificence, these trappings for a cavalcade, were not for the use of a prisoner, most readers must believe with Lord OXFORD, nor does there appear any manner of invalidating his Lordships argument, drawn from this account, in favour of *Richard*, but by supposing with other writers, that some of them were issued immediately on his accession, when it was necessary and usual, for such deliveries to be made, and at which period the young prince was alive; or that some of them

had been already prepared for EDWARD, as his uncle did not assume the legal power, till five days after the time appointed for his nephews coronation.

The DUKE of BUCKINGHAM's interview with the mayor and citizens, to endeavour to gain them over to favour RICHARD's claim to the crown, is not more eloquently than truly described by SHAKSPEARE, if we believe the old chronicler FABIAN. There is much humour in his quaint description.

"Then, upon the Tuesday following, an assemble of the Comons of the cytie was apoynted at the Guilhall. Where beinge present the Duke of Buckingham, with other Lordes sent downe from the saide Lorde Protectour, and here in the presence of the Maior and Cominalty, rehersed the right and title that the Lorde Protectour had to be preferred before his neves, the sonnes of his brother, king EDWARD, to the right of the crown of England. The which processe was so eloquent, wise, shrewed, and uttered without anye impediment of spittinge, or other countenance, and that of a long while, with so sugred words of exhortation and accordinge sentence, that many a wise man that day marvailed and commended him for the good ordering of his wordes, but not for the intent and purpose the which thereupon ensued.

SIR JAMES TYRRELL, the supposed director of the murder of the young princes, was according to SIR THOMAS MORE, "a brave handsome man, who deserved a better master, and would have merited the esteem of all men, had his virtue been as great as his valour." HALL, in his "*Chronicle*" says likewise, "The man had a high harte, and sore longed upward, not rising so fast as he hoped, beying hindered and kept under by RICHARD RATCLIFFE and SIR WILLIAM CATESBY, which longyng for no more partners of the princes favour, namelie not for him, whose pride they knew would bear no pere, kept him, by secret drifts, out of all secret trusts." He was beheaded May 6th, in the 17th year of HENRY VII.

Whatever was the cause of that harsh and severe treatment JANE SHORE met with, it hardly seems fair to impute it all, as Lord OXFORD does, to the Clergy, when it is evident, from the kings own letter, she was imprisoned

by his command, and that the prosecutions in the ecclesiastical courts, were carried on under his direction. The sudden attack upon Lord HASTINGS has all the appearance of a designed plot against him, for not concurring with others in placing the crown on GLOUCESTER's head. As they could not bring him over to join with them, they resolved to cut him off, as being a person of great power and popularity. He had hitherto, very consistently with his character, opposed the designs of the Queen, and assisted in making the Duke Protector of the realm, which was all that he thought he could justly claim; but when he found he had farther designs, which his attachment to his old master would not suffer him to approve of, it is no wonder he should be disposed to withdraw from such measures. As it is said he had an affection for JANE SHORE, during the life of king EDWARD, there seems no sort of improbability in his taking her under his protection immediately after the king's death; nor any sort of inconsistency in the MARQUIS of DORSET's afterwards doing the same upon LORD HASTINGS's decease.

There seems but little reason for the abhorrence SHAKSPEARE has made the Queen Dowager of EDWARD IV, and her daughter ELIZABETH, express against the marriage of the latter with RICHARD. BUCK, in his life of that king, refers to a letter remaining when he wrote, in the EARL of ARUNDEL's collection, written with that Princess's hand to the DUKE of NORFOLK, in which she first intimates that he was the man in whom she affied, in respect of that love her father had ever bore him, &c. Then she congratulates his many courtesies, in continuance of which she desires him to be a mediator for her to the king, in the behalf of the marriage propounded between them; who, as she wrote, was her only joy and maker in this world, and that she was in his heart and thought, withal insinuating, that the better part of February was past, and she feared the Queen would never die.

GOETHE AND HAMLET.

Mr. DRAMA,

It certainly has been with no little pleasure that I have lately perused a work, translated from GOETHE, the title of which is "*Wilhelm Meister's Apprenticeship*," and which I most strongly recommend to the lovers of the drama, as containing more real knowledge and a deeper insight into that noble art, than any work which for a long time has appeared in this country.

German literature has been unknown to us, excepting in those tales of horror which form so large a portion of the works of all their authors; and the authors themselves seem to be lost upon us, if indeed we were ever acquainted with them. For the translations usually fall so far short of the spirit of the original, that it may be said almost to be another work. *Wilhelm Meister* has brought us much nearer to a knowledge of GOETHE, than any work of that admirable author, which has appeared in an English dress, and it is really gratifying to the feelings of an Englishman, to hear and read with what reverence his favourite part is spoken of by one of the greatest geniusses that ever graced his country. The rapture with which GOETHE speaks of SHAKSPEARE, shews that he is really worthy of the high esteem in which he is held—all ages and all countries are happy to bear testimony of the worth of our immortal Bard. The character of *Hamlet* has fallen more particularly under the hand of GOETHE—and as it will be far more acceptable to hear the authors own words, I have selected a few passages out of numerous other ones, which shew the opinions of the Germans on that highly drawn character.

In the present dearth of theatrical news, I hope these extracts will be acceptable, but to those who have the books themselves from which these are taken, I can only say they must read and admire.

I am Mr. DRAMA,

Yours respectfully,

PHILO KRAN.

London, 31*st July*, 1824.

After a description of *Hamlet* himself our sublime GOETHE then tells his readers and his hearers how he would have *Hamlet* played, and commences thus: Conceive a prince such as I have painted him, and that his father suddenly dies: ambition, and the love of rule are not the passions that inspire him. As a king's son, he would have been contented, but now he is first constrained to consider the difference which separates a sovereign from a subject. The crown was not hereditary; yet a longer possession of it by his father, would have strengthened the pretensions of an only son, and secured his hopes of the succession. In place of this he now beholds himself excluded by his uncle, in spite of specious promises most probably for ever. He is now poor in goods and favour, and a stranger in the scene which from youth he had looked upon as his inheritance. His temper here assumes its first mournful tinge. He feels that now he is not more, that he is less than a private nobleman; he offers himself as the servant of every one; he is not courteous and condescending, he is needy and degraded.

His past condition he remembers as a vanished dream. It is in vain that his uncle strives to cheer him, to present his situation in another point of view. The feeling of his nothingness will not forsake him. The second stroke that came upon him wounded deeper, bowed still more. It was the marriage of his mother. The faithful tender son had yet a mother when his father passed away. He hoped in the company of his surviving noble minded parent, to reverence the heroic form of the departed; but his mother too he loses, and it is something worse than death that robs him of her. The trustful image, which a good child loves to form of its parents is gone. With the dead there is no help, on the living no hold. She is also a woman, and her name is frailty, like that of all her sex.

Now first does he feel himself completely bent and orphaned; and no happiness of life can repay what he has lost. Not reflective or sorrowful by nature, reflection and sorrow have become for him a heavy obligation. It is thus that we see him first enter on the scene. I do not think that I have mixed aught foreign with the piece, or overcharged a single feature of it.

Figure to yourselves this youth, this son of princes; conceive him vividly, bring his state before your eyes, and then observe him when he learns that his father's spirit walks; stand by him in the terrors of the night, when the venerable ghost itself appears before him. A horrid shudder passes over him; he speaks to the mysterious form; he sees it beckon him, he follows it, and hears. The fearful accusation of his uncle rings in his ears; the summons to revenge, and the piercing, oft repeated prayer, *Remember me!* And when the ghost has vanished, who is it that stands before us? A young hero panting for vengeance? A prince by birth, rejoicing to be called to punish the usurper of his crown? No! trouble and astonishment take hold of the solitary young man: he grows bitter against smiling villains, swears that he will not forget the spirit, and concludes with the expressive ejaculation:

"The time is out of joint: O! coursed spite,
That ever I was born to set it right!"

In these words, I imagine, will be found the key to *Hamlet's* whole procedure.

To me it is clear that SHAKSPEARE meant, in the present case, to represent the effects of a great action laid upon a soul unfit for the performance of it. In this view the whole piece seems to be composed. There is an oak-tree planted in a costly jar, which should have born only pleasant flowers in its bosom; the roots expand, the jar is shivered. A lonely, pure, noble, and most moral nature, without the strength of nerve which forms a hero, sinks beneath a burden which it cannot bear, and must not cast away. All duties are holy for him: the present is too hard. Impossibilities have been required of him; not in themselves impossibilities, but such for him. He minds, he turns, and torments himself; he advances and recoils: is ever put in mind; ever puts himself in mind; at last does all but lose his purpose from his thoughts; yet still without recovering his peace of mind. [Page 72, vol. 2.]

A few pages further on, GOETHE continues. It pleases us, it flatters us to see a hero acting on his own strength, loving and hating as his heart directs him; undertaking and completing, casting every obstacle aside, and at length

attaining some great object that he aimed at. Poets and historians would willingly persuade us that so proud a lot may fall to man. In *Hamlet* we are taught another lesson: the hero is without a plan, but the piece is full of plan. Here we have no villain punished on some self-conceited and rigidly accomplished scheme of vengeance: a horrid deed occurs, it rolls itself along with all its consequences, dragging guiltless persons also in its course; the perpetrator seems as if he would evade the abyss which is made ready for him; yet he plunges in, at the very point by which he thinks he shall escape and happily complete his course.

For it is the property of crime to extend its mischief over innocence, as it is of virtue to extend its blessings over many that deserve them not; while frequently the author of the one or the other is not punished or rewarded at all. Here in this play of ours, how strange! the pit of darkness sends its spirit and demands revenge; in vain! all circumstances tend one way, and hurry to revenge, in vain! neither earthly or infernal thing may bring about what is reserved for fate alone. The hour of judgment comes: the wicked falls with the good: one race is mowed away that another may spring up. [Page 87, vol. 2.]

In the composition of this play, after the most accurate investigation, and the most mature reflection, I distinguish two classes of objects.

The first are the grand internal relations of the persons and events, the powerful effects which arise from the characters and proceedings of the main figures; these I hold, are individually excellent; and the order in which they are presented, cannot be improved. No kind of interference must be suffered to destroy them, or even essentially to change their form. These are the things which stamps themselves deep into the soul, which all men long to see, which no one dares to meddle with. Accordingly, I understand, they have almost wholly been retained in our German theatres.

But our Countrymen have erred, in my opinion, with regard to the second class of objects, which may be observed in this tragedy, I allude to the external relations of the persons, whereby they are brought from place to place,

or combined in various ways by accidental incidents. These they have looked upon as very unimportant; they have spoken of them only in passing, or left them out entirely. Now indeed, it must be owned, these threads are slack and slender; yet they run through the entire piece and bind together much, that otherwise would fall asunder and does actually fall asunder, when you cut them off, and imagine you have done enough and more, if you have left the ends hanging.

Among these external relations I include the disturbances in Norway, the *bear* with *Young Fortinbras*, the embassy to his uncle, the settling of that feud, the march of *Young Fortinbras* to Poland, and his coming back at the end; of the same sort are *Horatio's* return from Willenburg, *Hamlets* wish to go thither, the journey of *Laertes* to France, his return, the dispatch of *Hamlet* into England, his capture by Pirates, the death of the two Courtiers by the letter which they carried. All these circumstances and events would be very fit for expanding and lengthening a novel; but here they injure exceedingly the unity of the piece, particularly as the hero has no plan, and are in consequence entirely out of place.

These errors are like temporary props of an edifice; they must not be removed till we have built a firm wall in their stead. My project therefore is, not at all to change those first mentioned grand situations, or at least as much as possible to spare them, both collectively and individually; but with respect to these external, as the dissipated and dissipating motives, to cast them all at once away, and substitute a solitary one instead of them.

The German Manager wants the characters of *Rosencrantz* and *Guildenstern* condensed into one—to which an author answers:—Heaven keep me from all such curtailments, they destroy at once the sense and the effect. What these two persons are and do, it is impossible to represent by one. In such small matters we discover SHAKSPEARE'S greatness. These soft approaches, this smirking and bowing, this assenting, wheedling, flattering, this whisking agility, this wagging of the tail, this aptness and emptiness, this legal knavery, this ineptitude and insipidity, how can they be express'd by a single man? There ought

to be, at least, a dozen of these people, if they could be had, for it is only in society that they are any thing, they are society itself; and SHAKSPEARE showed no little wisdom and discernment in bringing in a pair of them—Besides I need them as a couple that may be contrasted with the single, noble excellent *Horatio*.

Page 165, Vol. 2.

FRENCH PUFFING.

Dramatic puffing has been carried to considerable perfection among us; but in this, as in several others of the fine arts, we are excelled by our neighbours. Nothing more will be required to establish the French claim than the following account of Mlle. GEORGE. This actress is now travelling the departments, and exhibiting on the boards that rather extravagant mode of performing which is not always relished in the capital. She carries with her a kind of herald of her fame; and this person in one of the journals styles her the "Queen of fine actresses—the most beautiful woman at present on the stage." The following is the circular letter by which the manager of the theatre of Angers invited the chief person of his district to attend the performances of this "Queen of beautiful actresses."

"*Monsieur,—Madlle.* GEORGE, *the first tragic performer of France, and of the two theatres of the capital, having been pleased to consent to appear on the stage, to which I endeavour to draw the honourable public, I dare hope that you will deign to encourage my efforts by a tribute of admiration in favour of the most beautiful woman in Europe—such a woman as has not her equal in all the pomp of her brilliancy, the pupil of* TALMA *and Madlle.* RAUCOURT, *and, above all,* of beneficent and generous Nature. In coming to see *Madlle.* GEORGE, *you will at once see Nature.* TALMA, *and* RAUCOURT. *In the fine part of* Semiramis *she will appear with* 100,000 *crowns worth of diamonds. All the ornaments which she wears in that tragedy are precious stones.*

"*I present my humble respects, &c.*"

THEATRICAL INQUISITION.

"On the stage 'tis well known,
Is each character shewn,
Every whim, every changeable passion
There beneath Satire's rule.
Even VICE goes to school,
And FOLLY gets laughe'd out of fashion.

COVENT GARDEN THEATRE.

Journal of Performances with Remarks.

Sept. 27.—Romeo and Juliet—Harlequin and Poor Robin. The theatre opened this evening for the season. There does not appear to be any change in the embellishments nor any alteration in the general appearance of the boxes, from what they presented during the last season. It were idle at this period to enter into any criticism on *Romeo and Juliet*—the beauty of its poetry, the delicacy of the lovers' sentiments or the music of their language, the unique whimsicality of *Mercutio*, or the ever natural and forcible delineation of the *Nurse*,—the play-going public, as well as the closet readers of this masterpiece of SHAKSPEARE being all long since keenly sensible of its various beauties. Mr. CHARLES KEMBLE'S *Romeo* is identified with that of SHAKSPEARE, and the *Nurse* finds an able portraiture in the person and forcible performance of Mrs. DAVENPORT. Miss F. H. KELLY played *Juliet*; and in those trying scenes, where the first view of *Romeo* fires her young heart to love—in the balcony scene, when the feelings of her heart are more fully developed—with the *Nurse*, whom she caresses into her wonted attachment, after a fit of momentary displeasure:—all these formidable scenes were very respectably sustained by this promising young lady. She has evidently many of the higher qualifications for this walk of the drama, but her warmest friends and most sincere admirers must admit that her science wants maturing, and her general representation more fullness and finish.

Miss KELLY, however, has many of those commanding qualities to which respect is due; and we have no doubt, that when she has a longer experience, she will prove a source of attraction to the public, and of profit to the theatre. All the old favourites were warmly greeted as they entered, but none with stronger appearances of regard han Miss F. H. KELLY. We thought the applause bestowed upon her was occasionally unnecessary, and we would entreat those who really wish her well to be in future somewhat more abstemious. The house was much better attended than we could have expected, and we hope the management will use every exertion to deserve full houses for the season.

29.—Pride shall have a Fall—Brother and Sister.

Oct. 2d.—Inconstant—Irish Tutor—Tale of Mystery.

The "*Inconstant*" was this evening most charmingly performed. Let those who have nothing but the acerbity of critics in their nature, analyse the merits and demerits of the author, and with a phlegmatic precision detail the minutiæ of look, position, and tone, of the respective *dramatis personæ:* we shall fairly give ourselves up to the toil in which we were so delightfully betrayed by the most complete acting that was ever witnessed on any stage, and for the present lay aside our character of *Censor*, luxuriating for "a gentle space" in the rich recollection of our enjoyment, as a beholder of the most finished picture that was ever presented to us by that prince of genteel comedy—CHARLES KEMBLE. To have been present at his acting in the robbery scene, is an era in our play-going life, and one of those additions to our store of pleasant reminiscences for which our heart audibly responses its gratitude. It is mere fastidious fustian to say, that critics shall not feel like other men; and if they derive a pleasure which is at once intellectual and unalloyed, why, in candour's name, should they be restrained from acknowledging it? We look forward to a repetition of this comedy, when perhaps we shall resume our critical dignity, and mar the fine music with a harsh note or two of our own.

4th—Hamlet—Pantomime.

5.—John Bull—Charles 2nd.
6.—Maid Marian—Poachers.
7.—School for Scandal—Charles 2nd.

HAYMARKET THEATRE.

Aug. 24.—Young Quaker—Intrigue—X.Y.Z.
25. Blue Devils—Sweethearts and Wives—Married and Single.
26. Of Age to-morrow—Hypocrite—Love, Law and Physic.

This evening Mr. FARREN made his first appearance in the character of *Dr. Cantwell:* but we do not feel authorized to applaud either his conception or execution of the part; perhaps we are so fully pre-occupied by the favourable impressions made upon us by DOWTON's excellent performance of it, that we are hardly able to judge fairly of the effort made by FARREN. But it appeared to us that there was too much of that hard outline which usually attaches to many of the characters played by FARREN.—The smooth oily hypocrite of DOWTON, exactly meets the ideas every man had formed of the character before he sees it represented on the stage. The caustic sharpness of FARREN is less suitable to this, than perhaps to any part he ever assumed. The announcement of the repetition of the comedy was however received with great applause by a very crowded audience. Mrs. CHATTERLEY's *Charlotte*, was exceedingly well played, and bountifully rewarded by the ready approbation of the house.

27.—Beggar's Opera—Mrs. Smith—Married and Single.

Miss PATON, whose health it should seem, is more changeable even than the weather of this variable climate, has according to theatrical report withdrawn herself from this theatre; a young lady named HOLMES, a pupil of Miss CAREW, has therefore appeared for the first time in the character of *Polly;* and when she shall have shaken

off her "fears and trepidations," we have little doubt will turn out a tolerable singer; her voice has not much power, but it has much sweetness, and her execution is neat and unaffected.

28.—Sweethearts and Wives—Intrigues—XYZ.

30.—Love Law and Physic—Hypocrite—Of Age to-morrow.

31.—Twelve precisely—Married and Single—Sweethearts and Wives.

Sept. 1st.—Intrigue—Young Quaker—XYZ.

2.—Hypocrite—Killing no Murder—Two pages of Frederick the Great.

3.—Busy Body—Sweethearts and Wives.

4.—Hypocrite—XYZ.—A Roland for an Oliver.

6.—Africans—Intrigue—Love, Law and Physic.

7.—Of Age to-morrow—Sweethearts and Wives—Teazing made Easy.

8.—XYZ—Marriage of Figaro—Matrimony.

9.—Married and Single—Sweethearts and Wives.

10.—Young Quaker—Two Strings to your bow—Intrigue.

Mr. POOLE's agreable little dramatic sketch of *Intrigue* which was produced some years ago at Drury Lane, has been revived with great success. It is from beginning to end one unvaried scene of pleasant equivoque; and the performers, particularly COOPER, HARLEY and Mad. VESTRIS, appear to very great advantage. The duet introduced by the latter, is better sung and acted than ever we remember upon any previous occasion, and is always rapturously and deservedly encored.

11.—Clandestine Marriage—'TWOULD PUZZLE a CONJURER [1st. time]—Lovers Quarrels.

The *Clandestine Marriage*, though the dialogue at intervals is tedious and digressive from the main plot and the piece, deserves to rank amongst the best acting comedies of our drama. It possesses a *quantum sufficit* of buoyant humour, and comic incident to render it a light and laughable entertainment for a summer evening. FARREN's *Lord Ogleby* has been considered quite a masterpiece of that species of comedy to which it belongs. It is, indeed, the most perfect picture of amorous senility

on the stage. His tall and slender figure, his sharp visage, and the orbicular rolling of his eye, supply him with natural advantages, which, perhaps, no other actor possesses, for depicting the helplessness and dotage of the veteran voluptuary. We liked him better in the part, however, when we saw him first in it some few years ago. His performance was then more natural, and therefore more pleasing and perfect—"by least affecting, he affected most." Lately, however, his acting has acquired an artificial tinge; all his sayings and doings are a manifest aim at *coup de theatre*; his humour has become almost as dry as the remainder-biscuit after a voyage; and his voice from overweening anxiety to create effect, does not, as it was wont to do, "pipe and whistle in the sound like second childishness." Miss CHESTER played *Fanny* for the first time; she acted the part very delightfully, without at all overdoing it. It was easy, it was elegant, it was pathetic; in short, it was every thing that it ought to be. HARLEY, as *Brush*, was exceedingly droll. In the scene with Miss WOOD, he gave a perfect lesson to any portion of the audience that might feel disposed to affect drunkenness, and make love to a chambermaid.

A new farce with a whimsical title followed. The only discoverable pretext for such a title, is, that of one of the characters being placed in a situation of embarrassment, and thinking proper to exclain "*'twould puzzle a conjuror!*" to extricate himself. The piece, or rather the adaptation of it to the Haymarket, is by Mr. POOLE. The story is one which has been before embodied into farces, in a variety of shapes, and under a variety of names, at a variety of other theatres. It lies within a very narrow compass:—*Peter*, Czar of Muscovy, undertakes the very improbable task of visiting the principal towns of Europe, and of travelling through them in disguise in order to learn the respective trades of their inhabitants. In this pursuit he becomes a workman in the dock-yard of Sardam. He there assumes the name of *Peter Mishloff*. With him in the dock-yard is *Peter Stanmitz* (Mr. HARLEY), a deserter, who pays his court to a very pretty women (Mrs. CHATTERLY) whose only office in the piece is to run off the stage and return, and be kissed by whoever

happens to be upon it, all which she goes through with exemplary propriety, and manifest satisfaction to herself and the audience. It is ascertained that the Czar of Muscovy is at Sardam in disguise. The crowned heads send their ambassadors offering a reward to the Burgomaster (Mr. LISTON) to discover the distinguished Emperor. The several ambassadors, present their dispatches to the Chief Magistrate, who, in order to give Mr. LISTON an opportunity of making a few *lackadaisical* observations on his incapacity to spell, is made so deplorably ignorant as not to be able to read. The Burgomaster desires the master of the dock-yard to call all his men before him. He then orders any person amongst them of the name of Peter to stand forward. It happens that fifteen out of twenty bear that name, and therefore the mere name affords no clue to the discovery. A second command is given for "Peter, the foreigner," to come forth, and HARLEY and COOPER obey the call. The difficulty then is to discover which of them is the *incognito* Czar. The blundering Burgomaster thinks the probabilities are in favour of HARLEY, and tells him he is found out. HARLEY thinks his desertion is found out, and that he is to be shot. He is however hailed as Emperor; and, pleased with the title, thinks as well to bear it as to be shot. He feels some awkwardness in not having been brought up "in the potentate line;" but that inconvenience, as well as his incapacity to read, he expects to surmount by employing his comrade, *Peter Mishloff*, as his secretary. There is a great deal of manœuvring between the ambassadors of the different courts to try which of them shall first discover the Czar, and be entitled to the reward of 200 ducats offered for his detection. The Ambassadors are at fault, and some are misled to take HARLEY for his Majesty. The *Czar* (COOPER), however, reveals himself to the *French Ambassador* (Mr. COVENEY), who takes the unwarrantable liberty with his Majesty's title of *clipping* it most unmercifully, by calling him the "*Scissor*" of Muscovy. The situations of the piece are sufficiently dramatic, and the scenes between the Burgomaster and ambassadors are ludicrous, but somewhat too absurdly so. We need scarcely add, that the piece concludes by the recognition of the

real Czar, and he takes leave of the audience as he is on the eve of his departure, to reassume the government of his dominions, in which his sister Catharine had excited a revolt in his absence.

Such are the materials (neither very new nor very valuable ones) of the new farce. It has been manifestly got up, as modern drama's generally are, to suit the respective talents and peculiarities of the performers of the establishment for which the author writes. Accordingly, HARLEY had a part in which he could stop short and run about the stage, as suited his whim, and he had ample opportunities of displaying the *forte* of his performance; blundering vivacity, and blank stupidity. Again, the Burgomaster of Sardam was made to possess all the peculiarities of Mr. LISTON, and Mr. LISTON made to appear very unlike the Burgomaster of Sardam, or any other place. The dialogue is of extreme mediocrity, and as to sentiment and language, the new farce belongs to that department of the drama,

"——————— that yields no fairer trace
Of wit, than puns—of humour than grimace."

The farce was given out for repetition with, but partial applause.

13.—Blue Devils—Sweethearts and Wives—'Twould puzzle a Conjuror.

14.—Hypocrite—'Twould puzzle a Conjuror—Of Age to-morrow,

15.—Clandestine Marriage—Ibid.—Matrimony,

16.—Sweethearts and Wives—Ibid—No Song no Supper.

17.—Padlock—Married and Single—'Twould puzzle a Conjuror,

18.—Country Girl—'Twould puzzle a Conjuror—Review.

"A young Lady made her "first appearance on any stage," in the character of *Peggy* in the "*Country Girl*," and was exceedingly well received. Her performance was marked with great intelligence and spirit, and she preserved, throughout, the smartness and point of the dialogue. Her voice is good, and her articulation remarkably distinct. We shall speak more at large hereafter of her

qualifications and we certainly anticipate she will rank high in her profession. The audience testified their approbation of her performance most unanimously—and indeed a more successful *début* is rarely witnessed.

20.—Bombastes Furioso—Dog Days in Bond Street—Deaf as a Post—'Twould puzzle a Conjurer—[Benefit of Mr. LISTON.]

21.—Clandestine Marriage—Intrigue—'Twould puzzle a Conjurer.

22.—Sweethearts and Wives—'Twould puzzle a Conjuror—A Roland for an Oliver.

23.—Love and Gout—Devil to Pay—'Twould puzzle a Conjurer—Deaf Lover.

24.—Country Girl—'Twould puzzle a Conjurer—Two Strings to your Bow.

25.—Dog Days in Bond Street—Ibid.—Married and Single.

27.—Sweetheart's and Wives—Paul and Virginia—'Twould puzzle a Conjurer.

28.—Rivals—Devil to Pay—Ibid.

29.—Sweetheart's and Wives—'Twould puzzle a Conjurer—Paul and Virginia.

30.—Young Quaker—Ibid.—Devil to Pay.

Oct. 1st.—Clandestine Marriage—BIRDS WITHOUT FEATHERS—[1st time]—X.Y.Z.

A most absurd afterpiece was brought out at this theatre last night, called "*Birds without Feathers.*" We conceive it to be hardly necessary to give any outline of the plot, as it suffered strangulation at its birth. *Philip* [YOUNGER], an old misogymist, has reared his son *Henry* [Mrs. HILL], in such ignorance, that at the age of nineteen he does not know that there is such a thing in the world as a woman. In the neighbourhood there resides a friend of *Philip's*, *Rinaldo* [WILLIAMS], who has a daughter *Eliza* [Madame VESTRIS], brought up without having seen any other man than her father. She is kept closely confined, under the superintendance of an old *Gouvernante* [Mrs. C. JONES], who takes every opportunity of reviling the lords of the creation, and setting her fair charge against having any thing to say to them, should she ever by chance meet with any. By mere acci-

dent *Henry* gets a glimpse of *Eliza*, and is seized in consequence with very extraordinary excitements; and upon his soliciting his father to explain to him what the animal is, he tells him that it is a bird. (This monstrosity determined the fate of the farce.) *Henry* and *Eliza* meet, through the manœuvres of the latter, and, as is natural, fall in love, and their union is assented to by their fathers. The absurdity of this plot is not atoned for either by the dialogue, the music, or the songs. It is but in one act, but that was much too long for the audience to tolerate quietly, and at its conclusion it was, we believe, consigned to the tomb of all the Capulets. We remember something of this kind being produced at the Surrey Theatre, about seven years ago, under the name of "*Sixteen Years' Labour Lost.*

2.—Who wants a Guinea?—Intrigue—Animal Magnetism.

4.—Sweethearts and Wives—'Twould puzzle a Conjurer—Teazing made Easy.

5.—Hypocrite—Killing no Murder—Paul and Virginia.

6.—'Twould puzzle a Conjurer—Sweethearts and Wives—Teazing made Easy.

7.—Rob Roy—Intrigue—Fish out of Water.

ENGLISH OPERA HOUSE.

Aug. 24.—Der Freischütz—Gretna Green.

25.—Ibid.—Turnpike Gate.

26.—Ibid.—Free and Easy.

27.—Ibid.—Gretna Green.

28.—Ibid.—Padlock.

30.—Ibid.—Festival of Apollo—Rendezvous, [Benefit of Mr. BRAHAM.

Mr. BRAHAM took the above performances for his benefit this evening—and had a most crowded house. Whether it be owing to the merit of the music, or to the merit of the performer, or, as we think, to the combined merit of both, certainly no piece has been so attractive, and so deservedly

so, as that of "*Der Freischütz.*" On each night of its performance the Theatre has been crowded to excess. Those who were judges of music, as well as those who affected to be judges, thronged numerously to give it the meed of their approbation. Hitherto ROSSINI enjoyed, as it were, a monopoly of popularity; but VON WEBER, by the composition of "*Der Freischütz,*" has certainly stepped in to divide the laurel of musical superiority with the favoured Italian. Unquestionably there has been no opera by ROSSINI so popular in this country as that of WEBER. The compositions of ROSSINI are, as it were, standard productions and perfect models; but an impartial observer would, we think, find more real musical merit and science in the gay, joyous, and sparkling combinations of the German composer, than in the productions of his southern rival. Mr. BRAHAM, who is in this country without the shadow of a rival in the profession of which he is a distinguished ornament, gave all the exquisite songs of this opera with that powerful effect which extorts admiration and defies competition. A Mr. BERAL, from the Theatres of Dresden and Königsberg, appeared as *Caspar* last evening. He has been but for three months a resident in this country: he performed the part originally in Germany, and with due allowance for a foreign accent, and a few foreign peculiarities, his performance was highly creditable. By a little more attention to English pronunciation, to English manners, and English style of singing, he may, we think, become a very available acquisition to the English stage: but we should deceive him egregiously, if we did not impress on his mind, that he has many things to learn, as well as to *un*learn, before he arrives at that station in his profession to which his talents entitle him.—A concert followed the opera. BROADHURST gave "To ladies,' eyes around," as he gives every thing—with exquisite feeling and delightful effect. But the merit of the concert was, BRAHAM'S "*Scots wha hae*:" he was encored. BRAHAM requires to have the sweetness of his voice sustained by its depth and power; and in this, as well as in the songs of the opera, he has equal opportunities of sustaining himself in each respective department of his fascinating profession. Mr. BRAHAM had a *bumper* for his benefit; and if we

measure merit by the abilities which a performer contributes to the entertainment and delight of the public, certainly there is no performer who presents claims more unquestionable, or merits superior to those of Mr. BRAHAM.

31.—Ibid.—Free and Easy.

Sept. 1st.—Ibid —Turnpike Gate.

2.—Ibid.—Marriage of Figaro, [Benefit of Miss STEPHENS.

3.—JONATHAN IN ENGLAND, [1st time]—FROZEN LAKE, [1st time]—Hit or Miss.

In consequence of the temporary withdrawing of the very attractive opera "*Der Freischütz*," during the absence of Miss STEPHENS and Mr. BRAHAM, who are fulfilling some provincial engagements, the manager of this theatre, last night, introduced some other novelty: and, as if conscious of the magnitude of his recent loss, as well as his inability to produce a sufficient substitute, he favoured his patrons with *two* new pieces instead of the *one* so unavoidably and unprofitably withdrawn. The first entertainment was a new farce, by Mr. PEAKE, founded on the well-known entertainments, given by Mr. MATHEWS, at this house, after his return from America. As the name imports, it contains the adventures of that entertaining character during a visit to that country. The plot if we may so call a heterogeneous mixture of absurd incidents without point, without interest, and almost without connection, is too simply absurd to be artificial enough for a written development; and we must in justice observe that the talent of MATHEWS combined with that of BARTLEY, in the character of an English alderman alone preserved the piece from immediate condemnation. *Jonathan, W. Doubikins*, personated by the former, is first introduced to us at Liverpool, accompanied by his "*Nigger*" *Agamemnon* (excellently well played by SLOMAN,) whom he is anxious to "swop for a pony," or dispose of for a certain number of dollars. Here he delivers his "*Uncle Ben's*" letters of recommendation and introduction, and after getting turned out of "the Waterloo Hotel" for smoking, and brawling, with his sable attendant, and meeting with some very absurd and improbable adventures at another inn, to which he has thought proper to retire, procures a further

recommendation and starts for the metropolis. It so happens, however, that the same gentleman who has recommended our friend *Jonathan* to *Alderman Leatherlip Grossfeeder* has also sent him a postillion, one *Natty Larkspur*, who is anxious to succeed to the vacant saddle of his predecessor; and in the confusion which took place at the inn, in which *Natty* was a principal performer, the letter having got exchanged, the American on his arrival is taken for the post-boy—and "wicey wasey." The blunders and pleasantries which arise from these mixed letters, although rather far-fetched, are certainly humourous and entertaining. The mystery, is of course cleared up, and the characters and persons of *Jonathan* and *Natty* are satisfactorily identified. It will be seen that the author has left much to the actor to fill up—and MATHEWS is particularly happy in the part assigned him. The happiest scene is that in which *Jonathan* discourses upon liberty in the kitchen with the political butler—seasoning his remarks with the offer of his *Nigger* for sale. We must however observe, that the characters are unfaithful delineations of American, as they are of English manners, and *Jonathan* is as much a libel on the American character, as *Leatherlip Grossfeeder*, is an unjust and illiberal caricature of a city alderman. The time is certainly arrived when Mr. MATHEWS is "a pretty considerably damned deal" less particular about the nice feelings of the Yankees. These attempts to debase characters, in themselves respectable, can only be made tolerable in the performance by theatrical talent of the first degree of excellence. The piece, as a whole, will add nothing to Mr. PEAKE's reputation—and the curtain fell during the equivocal honour of a feeble applause.

The second novelty of the evening is a translation (by Mr. PLANCHE) from a French piece, called "*Le Niage*," and has all the characteristics of French frivolous inanity and equivocal morality. The plot is almost too *jejune* and trifling to require explanation. The scene is laid in Germany. A certain Grand Duke of Suabia is anxious, like all prudent fathers, to get his daughter well settled in the world; and the *Prince de Neubourg* is sent for to his court, for the purpose of marrying the young lady. The *Prince*, how-

ever, is not a very anxious lover, and the lady is moreover privately married to the *Count de Linsberg*, a dependant of her father's, and an orphan, whom he had ennobled and enriched. In this dilemma, the *Baroness de Rosefeld*, an open-hearted, kind and generous creature, is entrusted by the *Princess* with her secret; and she contrives for a long time to arrange their meetings for them, and ward off a discovery of what has taken place. At last, however, an unforseen, accident reveals the whole. One night, while sleeping with his bride, the lake is frozen over, and snow has fallen, which renders the escape of the count difficult to conceal—a sledge is resorted to, and is drawn by the princess and her friend. They are discovered by the duke, who pardons them, and the amiable baroness is rewarded with the hand of the *Prince de Neubourg*. Miss KELLY, as the *Baroness*, acted delightfuly; her anxiety for the happiness of her friends—her desire to procure them an interview without interruption—and her assumption of affected coolness, when any little thing has gone wrong and danger presses upon them—are admirably pourtrayed; without her, indeed, the effect of many of the scenes would have been very feeble. PEARMAN and Miss NOEL sang several delightful songs and duets, and the introduction of a gardener, who is excellently personated by KEELEY and a general in love (WRENCH) added to the general effect: the military *billet doux* of the latter excited much amusement. The first act is the essence of stupidity, and the second would appear the same, if it had not necessarily the advantage of the *denouement*, which relieved us (and the whole of the audience likewise) from the *ennui*, attendant on its dullness and insipidity. Mr. PLANCHE can do better.

4.—Frozen Lake—Jonathan in England.

6.—Frozen Lake—Jonathan in England—Hit or Miss.

7.—Ibid.—Ibid.—Ibid.

8.—Ibid.—Ibid.—Ibid.

9.—Der Freischütz—Frozen Lake.

Miss PATON succeeded Miss STEPHENS in the character of *Agnes* and sustained the part with equal effect, and acquitted herself in a manner which must be most satis-

factory to her friends, and creditable to that high professional reputation she at present enjoys. If she have not a richness of tone and a volume of voice equal to those of some of her competitors (we believe we should be more correct if we used the singular number), she is certainly inferior to none in the judicious management of her powers, in the scientific knowledge of her delightful art, and above all, in that which is beyond any other attainment, and without which all musical skill is in our opinion, almost valueless; we mean—distinctness of utterance. This qualification constitutes, we think, one of the chief attractions of song; and it is possessed in an eminent degree by Miss PATON. In the long and difficult song of "*Before my eyes beheld him*," she gave striking exemplifications of this excellence, which were felt and duly appreciated by the audience. The *Rodolph* of Mr. PEARMAN was also a most respectable performance; and though he could not enter the lists as a competitor with him who is admitted to reign in the musical world without a rival, the propriety of his action, the advantages of his appearance, and his general professional powers, made him an excellent representative of the German forester. The duet between him and *Agnes*, immediately before the trial shot, was executed with great beauty and effect, and was loudly and deservedly applauded.

10.—Frozen Lake—Jonathan in England—Hit or Miss,

11.—Der Freischütz—Gretna Green.

13.—Frozen Lake—Jonathan in England—Hit or Miss.

14.—Ibid.—Ibid.—Ibid.

15.—Ibid.—Ibid.—Ibid.

16.—Der Freischütz—Free and Easy.

17.—Brother and Sister—Jonathan in England—Hit or Miss.

18.—Der Freischütz—Gretna Green.

20.—BASHFUL MAN, [1st time]—Love among the Roses—Jonathan in England.

Another new piece (by Mr. MONCRIEFF) was this evening produced for the purpose of shewing off Mr. MATHEWS: of whom, the manager seems determined to make the most during his engagement. The plot is as follows:

Mr. Blushington [MATHEWS] is sent by his father to Oxford as a poor scholar, where he is to make his way by hard reading; but in consequence of a large fortune devolving an him by the sudden death of a relation, he quits college and his books, and prepares for his *entré* into polite life: never having been accustomed to this he is quite at fault, and his *mauvaise honte* renders him completely ridiculous. He is invited to dine with *Sir T. Friendly* [BENNETT,] with whose daughter *Dinah* [Miss POVEY,] it is proposed to bring about a match, having been acquainted with her brother, *Frank Friendly* [BROADHURST,] at college. At dinner his bashfulness and awkwardness are sadly conspicuous, in overturning the soup upon himself, and eating hot pudding, and afterwards, in his retreat from the scene of such exposures, in drawing the table-cloths along with him; indeed, the whole of this scene was highly ludicrous. Young *Friendly* then suggests to the family, to invite themselves to dine with *Blushington*, and by the example of their ease and impudence, to cure him of his failing. They accordingly come, much against the wish of their host, who, during his entertainment, gets very tipsy, and then forms a determination to assume courage. The whole of his drunken soliloquy is very comic and effective. In the end he takes heart to solicit the hand of the fair *Dinah*, which is readily yielded, she already confesses a *penchant* for him, notwithstanding that he lacked the wit to find it out—and thus the piece ends.

We have not enumerated one half of the mishaps of the bashful man—they are, altogether, eminently ludicrous. The dinner scene, which concludes the first act is irresistibly laughable. Mr. MATHEWS's personation of the *Hero* must be reckoned amongst his most successful efforts: the situations in which he is placed are highly entertaining, and he does not fail to make the most of them. He has two excellent scenes in the second act,—the one in which he declares his passion for his mistress, and the other, in which he exhibits the alterations produced in him by drunkenness, both of which he plays with great spirit and originality. Miss POVEY and Mr. BROADHURST sustained their slight parts well, and sang one or two pretty duets.

The piece (which is founded on a story in CUMBERLAND's *Observer*) was received with the highest relish and applause

21.—Ibid.—Brother and Sister—Ibid.

22.—Ibid.—Military Tactics—Ibid.

23.—Frozen Lake—Der Freischütz.

24.—Bashful Man—Is he Jealous?—Jonathan in England.

25.—Frozen Lake—Der Freischütz.

27.—Bashful Man—Belles without Beaux—Jonathan in England.

28—Ibid—Promissory Note—Ibid.

29.—Ibid.—Jonathan in England—Bashful Man—Hit or Miss.

30.—Vampire!—Is he Jealous?—Where shall I dine?

Oct. 1st.—Brother and Sister—Frozen Lake—Ibid.

2.—Bashful Man—Jonathan in England—Hit or Miss.

4.—Brother and Sister—Frozen Lake—Rival Soldiers.

5.—Marriage of Figaro—Gordon the Gypsey.—This was the last night of a most brilliant season.

The following farewell address was spoken by Mr. BARTLEY:—

LADIES AND GENTLEMEN—As the performances of this evening will terminate our short season, it becomes my duty to offer the usual tribute of thanks for the patronage we have enjoyed. On no former occasion have I been warranted in doing this in terms so entirely unqualified as on the present; the great and various exertions which have been made to ensure your favour, have all been crowned with unprecedented success; and it is not saying too much to assure you, that our gratitude is commensurate with your liberal patronage. The proprietor hopes that he does not arrogate to himself more merit than your kindness will afford to him, when he boasts of having been the first to bring forward the masterly composition of the *Freischütz*. The production of this splendid opera may almost be considered as a new era in dramatic music; and the extraordinary success which has attended it—notwithstanding the enormous expense incurred by its performance, and the other novelties which have been provided for your entertainment—has convinced him, that, even in

his very limited season, in the most unfavourable period of the year, a powerful combination of excellence and talent is certain to receive the gratifying meed of your protection and support. In this conviction, it is hardly necessary to assure you, that the next season shall be marked even by increased energy, and by new efforts to merit your approbation.

It now only remains for me, Ladies and Gentleman, to offer you the sincere thanks of the proprietor; and, in my own name, and that of all the performers, to bid you, respectfully, farewell.

SURREY THEATRE.

Aug. 26.—During the performances of this evening, the audience was thrown into the most sensitive alarm, by an accident which took place on the stage, and which was likely to have ended fatally in its consequences. At the conclusion of the piece entitled "*The Burning Bridge*," a *Spectre* (performed by Mr. LESLIE), has to make its appearance to *Konang* (ROWBOTHAM), surrounded by clouds, while seated in a car. In descending from the top of the stage, by some accident the machinery came in contact with some of the burning materials, and the trappings with which the young gentlemen was surrounded caught fire. In a short period he was enveloped in flames, in which awful situation he remained for some time, the car being too elevated for him to leap out, and he seemed not to be aware of the danger that threatened him until the car was about eighteen feet from the floor of the stage. The audience, on viewing the dreadful dilemma in which he was placed, expressed a feeling of horror, and several ladies fainted. The flames at length became so powerful, that Mr. LESLIE leaped from the car to the stage, and fell with considerable violence, in consequence of which he was dreadfully injured about the legs, &c. The curtain immediately dropped, and the unfortunate young gentleman was carried into the Green Room, and a surgeon instantly procured. It was afterwards announced to the au-

dience that he was not dangerously hurt, which seemed to appease their fears, as he was considered to be severely injured. He was conveyed home, and we understand that he is doing very well at present.

Sept. 6th—DER FREISCHUTZ, *or the Dæmon of the Wolf's Glen and the seven Enchanted Bullets.*

It would seem as if the success of *Der Freischütz* in Germany, and its subsequent success at the Lyceum, had created a general disposition in all the managers of the metropolis to produce it at their respective theatres. Already the Royal Amphitheatre (with very inferior preparations) has brought it out, and we understand a rival exhibition of the performance at this theatre, was attempted, we cannot say with what success, at Bartholomew Fair. Amidst the many competitions into which the London theatres have entered for the successful production of this piece, the exertions of the managers of the Surrey Theatre deserve a very favourable mention. With due allowance for the size of the theatre—the nature and limited extent of its resources, as well as the taste of its visitors, which it is its duty as well as interest to conciliate, the performance of last evening was highly creditable and deservedly successful. The story is, with very slight variation, the same as has already been produced at the English Opera: there is a vein of comedy introduced into it which is not in the original piece, but this is probably attributable to the cause to which we have already alluded—the expediency of catering to the taste of the audience who frequent this theatre. The managers, judging rightly of their resources, threw the strength of the piece into its scenic, rather than operatic attractions. To this opinion, however, an exception should be made in favour of the orchestra, which, in the execution of the overture and the other sublimely beautiful pieces, of music, with which the Opera abounds, displayed an accurate and scientific acquaintance with this fascinating art, and won frequent applauses and "golden opinions" from the audience. We missed of course the rich volume of BRAHAM's voice, and the cultivated sweetness of Miss STEPHENS's syren tones, but the scenery was in many parts superior even to what we have witnessed at the Lyceum,

The incantation scene was really introduced in a style of surpassing splendour. Owls flapping their wings—serpents hissing in the air—shadows moving, and every concomitant of terror and diabolism were summoned into requisition, to give energy and effect to this awful and impressive scene. The principal alteration in the piece is the substitution of *Caspar* for *Rodolph*. This might be unpleasant to the fastidiousness of the taste of German spectators, but to an English audience the story tells equally good either way. Mr. ROWBOTHAM as *Rodolph*, played in a style of admirable and correct keeping, very superior to that which we meet with at, what is somewhat unfairly and arrogantly called, the minor theatres.

The machinery of the last scene was most cleverly managed, the manner in which the *Dæmon* descended in his fiery car and disappeared with *Count Rodolph*, excited general expressions of applause. The piece has had a very long and deservedly successful *run*.

Sept. 26.

"And real heroes crowd the scene."

Those of our readers who take an interest in the rise and fall of theatres, their managers, and their heroes, probably know that Mr. WILLIAMS, the enterprising Manager of this Theatre, has for some time past, in consequence of his extensive expenditure for the public gratification, been a resident within the Rules of the King's Bench. As Mr. W. while in this situation, was unable to superintend the performances, being prohibited from entering the theatre by the Act which excludes all places of public amusement from the Rules, he let the theatre for nine weeks to one of the performers and a friend who was one of his sureties to the Marshal of the King's Bench, in the expectation that, at the expiration of that time, he might be in a situation that would enable him to resume the management.

On the expiration of the nine weeks for which the Theatre was let, Mr. W. though not yet removed from the Rules of the King's Bench, was desirous of resuming the possession; but the new occupants positively refused to surrender it up. Mr. W. not perhaps unred-

sonably, expressed considerable dissatisfaction at this determination; and the occupants being apprehensive of an attempt at a forcible ejectment, Mr. W's *friend*, who was his surety to the Marshal, rendered him in discharge of his liability, and he was, in consequence, brought within the walls. This was on Friday last. Mr. W. lost no time in obtaining another surety, and on Saturday he, accompanied by his friends, who mustered in great force on the occasion, proceeded to the Theatre, which was at that time but weakly garrisoned, and, on the appearance of the enemy, surrendered at discretion. The triumph, however, was of short duration. As soon as the tidings reached the chiefs of the opposite party, they used every exertion to collect their partisans, and soon assembled a force, with which it was determined to try the fortune of war.

A council was held to decide on the best mode of attack; and as Mr. W. with a chosen band, protected the different entrances to the Theatre, it was deemed expedient, rather than risk an attack on the Manager, to have recourse to stratagem. The party in consequence availed themselves of the friendship of the occupant of an adjoining house, who allowed them to ascend his roof, from which they easily reached the roof of the Theatre, where they soon succeeded in making a practicable breach, through which a considerable force entered, before they were perceived by the garrison. A sharp conflict immediately took place; victory for some time remained doubtful; and were it not for the excluding law, which prevented the Manager appearing amongst his troops, and encouraging them by his presence, it is thought the assailants would have been repulsed with loss. At length, however, they succeeded in establishing themselves in possession, and the Manager's friends were expelled, having lost all but their honour. The Manager, however, still hovered round the scene of his hopes and fears, and endeavoured, by an impassioned statement of his rights and his injuries, to interest the company coming to the Theatre in his cause, and to obstruct the ingress of the partisans of the successful belligerent. For this purpose he placed himself at the stage-door, and opposed the entrance of DANIEL MUCKLETWAIT, an active partisan of the enemy. A scuffle ensued, in

which both went down. In the judgment of a Bow-street Officer, who was present, DANIEL was the assaulter, and he was in consequence transferred to the watch-house. A faithful ally of the Manager's, named FLOWER, was engaged in the defence of another entrance, when he was assailed and dislodged by another opponent, named BEN JOHNSON. The party in possession, however, succeeded in resisting every attempt to defeat their enterprise.

On Monday an investigation of the affair took place before the Magistrates of Union Hall, at the King's Bench prison.

The Magistrates refused to interfere in the question of right; but held MUCKLETHWAIT and JOHNSON to bail, to answer the assault.

Oct. 4th.—THE KŒUBA; *the Indian Pirates Vessel*—A Melo Drama from the pen of Mr. BALL, abounding with senseless clap-traps for the gallery, and ridiculous and improbable situations, and utterly unworthy of the ability which that gentleman unquestionably possesses, appeared this evening. We cannot attempt an analysis of the plot—it was really "past all comprehension." The actors were respectable and it received more applause than it deserved: but this we think was owing to the beauty of the scenery. The first scene, consisting of an extensive Dioramic Sea-view from an ancient jetty on the Irish Coast, with vessels, sailors in boats, fishermen casting their nets, &c. by TOMKINS, is really a magnificent painting. The language of the piece, is the merest common-place rubbish imaginable, and we are surprised, that Mr. B. after the advice we have so frequently tendered him, could suffer a production of so mediocre a description to come before the public. But perhaps he is in want of——cash! —in *charity* therefore we shall desist at present from further observations.

COBOURG THEATRE.

The principal novelty at this theatre during the past month has been a new Melo-Drama entituled GEORGE THE THIRD, *the Father of his People*. It is from the pen

of Mr. Mc Farren. The following is a brief outline of a production, which can boast, at least, the merits of perfect originality. The scene is laid principally at Windsor, in the neighbourhood of which *Mr. Harbury*, once moving in the highest rank of commercial opulence, but now reduced to indigence and beggary, resides, accompanied by his three children, two daughters and an infant son. These constitute his entire family, and form his only consolation under the double calamity of the death of his wife and the loss of his fortune. His eldest daughter, *Rose*, is attached to the young *Lieutenant Godfrey*, and is sincerely loved by him in return. The officer is ordered to London, and his betrothed, unable to witness the distress and suffering of her father, which she is unable to alleviate, forms the resolution of following him to the capital. She leaves a letter for her father, informing him of her departure. The account overwhelms him with anguish, and whilst he is lamenting his own misfortunes and the supposed loss of his child, he is informed by *Lord Adamant* (a coarse imitation of *Lord Ogilby*), then on his way to the Castle of Windsor, that the companion of his daughter's flight, and the cause of his unhappiness, could be no other than the *Prince of Wales*, his present Majesty, then an inmate of the Royal abode at Windsor.

Such is, as far as we can collect, the main incident of the performance, and upon this, as a foundation, our author thinks proper to exhibit the domestic intercourse and private habits of their late Majesties, and of various members of the present Royal Family. It seems he is not satisfied with the industry of the biographer, or the research of the historian. He is determined the labours of the dramatist must be also employed upon the subjects to which we have alluded. He perhaps thinks with the critic of antiquity—

> Segnius irritant animos demissa per amem,
> Quam quæ sunt oculis subjecta fidelibus—

and he has availed himself of the precept, in our opinion in a manner neither consistent with propriety nor good taste. It surely was unnecessary to represent his late Majesty, personated by his humble subject, Mr. Bengough;

as engaged in the avocation of gathering the turnips and eggs of a famer's wife, who meets with an accident on her way to market, still less was it necessary to describe him as he entered into familiar intercourse with the grooms and helpers of the Mews. Amiable and benevolent as it must be admitted GEORGE THE THIRD was, his manner was not imposing, nor was his appearance impressive; he was distinguished by many peculiarities of speech, which are faithfully retained in this curious performance; upon this trifling and unimportant infirmity the public was informed, even to satiety, by the humour of the facetious PETER PINDAR, to whom, as well as to another licentious poet, may be applied the line of Pope—

"He wanted grace, who never wanted wit."

In this respect, the imitation is stupid as well as irreverent. The political events of our late revered Monarch's reign, are also represented. *Margaret Nicholson* struts her hour upon the stage. Our author has, by a poetical license, clothed the character of this wretched maniac with something like interest. He describes her as frenzied from the loss of her lover, and the King is saved from her knife by the coolness and intrepidity of *Lieutenant Godfrey*, then on duty at the Palace. In addition to all these incidents our author has undertaken a more difficult task: he has introduced us to those attic feasts at which the PRINCE OF WALES presided, surrounded by all the social wit, talent, and literature of the empire. Amongst the list of his Highness's company we find the names of Mr. Fox, Lord ERSKINE, Mr. SHERIDAN, Mr. WILBERFORCE, &c. If the names of these distinguished ornaments of the Senate and social board were not mentioned in the bills, we should not suspect them to be of the party. We certainly had no internal evidence to warrant the supposition that they were present, for Mr. Fox was without wisdom, Lord ERSKINE was perfectly silent, and a single gleam of wit was not emitted by the author of the "*School for Scandal*". We had nearly forgot the *Queen*, who, like the *King*, flourishes for some 40 years in a green old age, and blazes out a very dragon in virtue, on a request for the admission of some duchess to her Court. The whole piece is a mass of absurdity; but is evidently well suited

to excite the loyalty of the sort of people who frequent this house. There were various other attempts made at similar delineations; but we believe the number selected will satisfy the curiosity of our readers. There was also a kind of Episode of a jealous farmer's wife, who had the honour of coquetting with his present Majesty. All parties are made happy by the benevolence and philanthropy of our late Monarch, who recognizes in the young officer his preserver from assassination, rewards him accordingly, and enables him to marry the object of his attachment. These are but few of the incidents of which this piece is composed; the music was pleasing, and there was some excellent dancing, particularly a minuet by Mr. and Mrs. LECLERQ, though of the lady's performance we were not able to judge as accurately as we could wish, on account of the immensity of her gown and the length of her drapery. We presume she adopted this unbecoming style of dress to gratify the prejudice of *Queen Charlotte* (before whom she is supposed to perform) who was known to be extremely scrupulous in every thing relating to female attire. The audience seemed to like the performance, and it was announced for repetition, with curtailments, with loud applause. The *Blind Beggar of Bethnal Green* followed.

Sept. 19th. An outrage took place at this house which from its frequency of late, deserves the severest punishment. A man named WM. CAREY, a recruit belonging to the Queens regiment of foot, threw a glass bottle from the gallery, but which was fortunately unattended by accident, On the following day the man together with another person, attached to the same corps were brought in custody to Union Hall, before L. B. ALLEN, Esq. under the above charge.

Mr. DAVIDGE, the acting stage manager, with several individuals connected with the theatre, attended, and stated, that on Saturday night last, after the conclusion of the first piece, and during the performance of the overture to that which followed, a considerable alarm was excited throughout the house by some person in the gallery having flung a quart bottle on the stage, which fortunately missed the head of the leader of the band, struck the

foot-light lamps, several of which it demolished, and alighted on the stage, where it was smashed in pieces.

The Magistrate called on the prisoner to state what could induce him to commit such a deliberate and scandalous act as that which had just been clearly made out against him,

The prisoner who appeared from his manner to be unconscious of having committed any serious offence, replied, that he was *intossicated*, and he did not know what he did; but that if it was now looked over, he would never do the like again.

MR. ALLEN observed, that his apologies would not do; and in committing the defendant to gaol, in default of bail, to answer the complaint at the Sessions, the Magistrate remarked, that had any fatal consequences ensued from the act, he certainly should have felt it his duty to commit the prisoner for murder.

SADLER'S WELLS.

Aug. 23.—We looked in at this theatre this evening, and were much gratified to see every part occupied, particularly the boxes which were filled with many persons of distinction; and we were still more pleased at finding it for the benefit of one of the oldest and most deserving favourites of the public, the reviver of pantomime—JOE GRIMALDI—whose exertions and extraordinary powers have been so many years the general theme of admiration and delight, and who has influenced the risible faculties of his auditory more often, and with greater success, than any other living artist. The new piece, entitled "*The Fatal Island, and the Hour of Four*," was highly successful. It is exceedingly well got up. The Pantomime followed, in which J. S. GRIMALDI played the *Clown* with a degree of excellence that in many parts reminded us of the wit and humour of his father. BARNES's *Pantaloon* is decidedly the best on the stage. In a scene selected for the purpose, JOE GRIMALDI came forward to give his favourite song, "*Hot Codlings*," which was the principle novelty of the evening—not perhaps the song, but the re-appearance of this comic actor, after his severe indisposition.

ROYAL VAUXHALL GARDENS.

These Gardens closed a very successful season, on Sept. 3rd when the following Address was spoken by Mr. WILLIAMS.

"Ladies and Gentlemen.—At the conclusion of the third year of the present Proprietorship of these Gardens, I have first to offer you their most sincere and respectful acknowledgments for a season of great success and popularity.

"Honoured as they have been by the gracious Patronage of his Majesty, the presence of Royalty, and the repeated visits of the highest classes of the Nobility, and the British Nation, the Proprietors cannot but with regret acknowledge, that this evening comes, like the close of a delighiful summer's day,—too soon! Yet to prolong the sunshine of their success, to the detriment of other Public Establishments, would only tend to lessen them in your estimation, and consequently in their own.

Your generous patronage has redeemed every hazardous expenditure, and given a renewed impulse to future exertion.

The appropriation of one night only, in the Season, to the Juvenile Fete, seems to have given such entire satisfaction, that the Proprietors have determined not to alter that arragement in future.

"The general and unvarying approbation which, throughout the season, has been bestowed on the various amusements and arrangements, as well as on the refreshments, wines, &c. is a matter of high gratification to the Proprietors; to deserve a continuance of which, will be their incessant aim.

"Improvements are in contemplation for the next season, which the Proprietors trust will continue to render Vauxhall the resort of the Noble, the Fashionable, and a Discerning British Public.

"In the name of the Proprietors, and of every member of this establishment, I beg to offer their grateful acknowledgments, and most respectfully to say—Farewell!"